

## Iran denies any link with Al Nafeer

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iran has denied any involvement with the Shabab Al Nafeer (Younger of the Wind) group that was last week uncovered in Jordan. A statement issued by the Iranian embassy here called a report it said was broadcast on Radio Monte Carlo, linking Iran to the Al Nafeer, as "an attempt to distort the brotherly relations" between Jordan and Iran. Two deputies, Leila Shabbat and Youssef Qarrah, together with ten others were arrested for allegedly forming the illegal organisation and for supplying it with arms. Mr. Shabbat and Sheikh Qarrah are being detained pending investigation expected to start today. Sheikh Qarrah's lawyer, Ahmad Nijadaw, has so far refrained from commenting on the case. Mr. Shabbat's lawyer, Ibrahim Bakr, has taken his case and is expected to attend Mr. Shabbat's questioning today.

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## 2 Israelis attacked in Arab Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Arabs stabbed and slightly wounded two Jews in Jerusalem's Old City Friday, Israeli police said. A 15-year-old girl attacked an Israeli policeman with a broken bottle and wounded him in the leg, police said. She was arrested. Hours later, an Arab stabbed a Jewish settler in the back and slightly wounded him, police said. Both attacks were in the Old City's Muslim quarter.

## Ramtha beats UAE club

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's Al Ramtha Club Friday beat Bani Yass of the United Arab Emirates 3-2 in a match held at Al Hassan Stadium in Irbid as part of the Asian Cup Winners' Cup. Al Ramtha's goals were scored by Muraqab Abu Hadeed (twice) and Bassam Azazleh, while Bani Yass' goals were scored by Hussein Ahmad and Saleh Ismail. Al Ramtha will play Bani Yass in the UAE next Friday to determine who qualifies for the second stage of the tournament.

## Rabin to visit Germany in September

BONN (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will meet Chancellor Helmut Kohl and other German leaders during an official visit to Bonn and Berlin on Sept. 14-16, a German government spokesman said Friday. The spokesman said Mr. Rabin would have talks with Mr. Kohl, Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and Defence Minister Volker Ruehe in Bonn.

## Ashrawt to consult Arafat

WASHINGTON (R) — Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawt will fly to Tunis this week for consultation with Middle East peace talks on Tuesday. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in remarks published Friday. Mr. Rabin also said he was ready to meet "any place, any time" with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and acknowledged that Israel has been negotiating indirectly with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Middle East peace talks.

## 4 killed in plane crash near Tel Aviv

TEL AVIV (AP) — All four people aboard a light plane were killed Friday when the two-engine aircraft, headed for a landing strip, crashed in a nearby field and burst into flames. The crash occurred near the Dov airfield in northern Tel Aviv, Israel. Radio said the Piper Aztec took off from Dov at about 10 a.m. (0700 GMT) on route to Elat. Within minutes, the pilot reported engine trouble and the Dov control tower told him to turn back. The plane crashed several hundred metres short of the Dov landing strip, the radio said.

## Iranian mariners support Bosnians

NICOSIA (AP) — Millions of people through out Iran poured into the streets Friday for rallies in support of Muslim aid in war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The agency said that demonstrators in Tehran, most of them dressed in black as a sign of mourning, denounced the West for keeping out of the conflict. IRNA did not give the size of the crowd in Tehran. It said protesters carried banners and posters proclaiming "Death to America," and "Death to Israel," and denouncing the Serbs for killing Muslims in Bosnia.

## Tajik radio says 30 killed in fighting

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan (R) — Tajik radio said Friday that at least 30 people had been killed in fighting between supporters and opponents of President Rakhmon Nabiyev in the former Soviet Republic. The radio, quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency, said the clashes took place in the southern region of Kurgan-Tyube, near Tajikistan's border with Afghanistan.

## Jordan-Israel track at standstill as talks recess

Combined agency dispatches

ARAB-ISRAELI peace talks in Washington have recessed until Sept. 14 at the request of the Israeli side. While the Palestinians and Israelis Thursday reported movement in their separate tracks of negotiations and Israel said it detected a new approach from the Syrian side, Jordanian-Israeli talks appeared to be at a standstill, with the Kingdom's official spokesman reporting no progress in efforts to reach agreement on a "common agenda."

Negotiations between Israel and Lebanon have made little headway. A political crisis caused by a Christian boycott of parliamentary elections and doubts over whether Syrian troops will withdraw on schedule from most of the country has undermined the talks.

There has not been much development in our talks over the past few days with the Israelis. The situation is still very much as it was when I met with you on Tuesday," spokesman Marwan Musasher told reporters Thursday.

"I would again stress that we feel that an agreement over the agenda is a very important step in our talks with the Israelis because this will set the framework for the rest of the negotiations. And that is the reason we want

to make sure that we have explored every possible way to hammer out the differences that remain between us," he said.

The recess was not our choice. We would have preferred to stay in Washington and to keep engaged. However, we do hope that the Israelis — since they're having a recess anyway — will come back from Israel with new ideas on the issues," he added.

Dr. Musasher also said that the chief delegate, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, along with some members of the Jordanian delegation, met with Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger Thursday morning. Mr. Eagleburger commended Jordan on its role in and approach to the peace process, he said, adding that Dr. Majali briefed the acting secretary on developments in the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations, explaining the present difficulties in the discussions over the common agenda.

Secretary Eagleburger really listened to what progress or lack of it has been in our negotiations more than he presented any firm, specific ideas at this point. He commended us on our progress, well. He thought that Jordan is playing a critical role in the process and he said (so), Dr. Musasher said.

Dr. Majali reiterated Jordan's commitment to the "triangle of land, peace and security" which was articulated in Madrid by the then Secretary of State James Baker, the Jordanian spokesperson said.

Dr. Musasher said he differs with the conventional wisdom that the

Jordanian-Israeli track is among the easiest negotiating tracks, because, he said, there are serious issues that resulted from the Palestinian conflict which affect Jordan directly — issues such as the refugee problem and settlements, among others.

He reiterated the Jordanian view that settlements pose a direct economic, military and security threat to Jordan. "As such, they are a Palestinian concern as they are a Palestinian one," he said, explaining that as a result of settlements, close to 150,000 Palestinians were expelled to Jordan since 1967, adding to Jordan's demographic and water problems.

"The settlements, many of which are along the River Jordan, pose a direct security and military threat to Jordan," he said, adding that Israel's confiscation of land that belongs to Palestinians has contributed to the forcing of Palestinians out of the West Bank and into Jordan.

Dr. Musasher said the Jordanian side was not consulted on the issue of the Sept. 4 — 14 recess. "We do not feel that a 10-day recess is warranted, particularly at this time when we are trying to have continuous negotiations, when all sides agree that long recesses are not in the interest of the peace process. We feel that to keep engaged in the issues might serve a better purpose. Ten days is just too long," he said.

In response to a question regarding Jordan's involvement in the Palestinian-Israeli track as far as the issue of water and settlements, Dr. Musasher explained that water is a

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## Rabin says settlements marginal, do not serve Israeli 'security'

Combined agency dispatches

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — Most Jewish settlements in the occupied territories are only of "marginal" importance and contribute almost nothing to Israel's "security," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in remarks published Friday.

Mr. Rabin also said he was ready to meet "any place, any time" with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and acknowledged that Israel has been negotiating indirectly with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Middle East peace talks.

The prime minister's partial freeze on building in West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements has angered the settlers who fear for their future if the peace talks lead to Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories. Mr. Rabin has said that during the five-year period of autonomy being negotiated, Israel would be responsible for the 115,000 settlers. But their fate will be a key issue in talks expected later on the final status of the occupied territories.

Mr. Rabin distinguishes between

"security" settlements around occupied Jerusalem and the West Bank's Jordan Valley and "political" ones in the heartland of the West Bank and all of Gaza.

"They (the settlements) aren't a top priority for me, only a marginal priority," Mr. Rabin told Israel's largest newspaper, Yedioth Ahronoth, in the first priority is the battle against unemployment... strengthening the economy. This is what will make Israel a strong country and not political settlements."

Palestinians and Israelis are negotiating a five-year period of limited self-rule for nearly two million Arabs in the occupied territories. Talks on a permanent settlement are to begin three years from the start of Palestinian self-rule.

Israel has proposed Palestinians elect an administrative council to run 15 years of life such as health and education under existing laws. Palestinians want an assembly with law-making powers of a sovereign parliament.

Despite the problems, Mr. Rabin said he remained optimistic of reaching agreement on terms for Palestinian autonomy within one year.

He said Israel would be prepared to negotiate an interim arrangement with Syria ahead of a peace treaty.

"We said some discuss a security arrangement for the event of peace."

During his successful campaign to oust Yitzhak Shamir earlier this year, Mr. Rabin virtually wrote off chances of progress in talks with Syria.

But he breathed new life into the talks by accepting the principle of withdrawing from part of the strategic Golan Heights — a move for peace.

"No Israeli in the Golan Heights has experienced terrorism. There has not been a single infiltration attempt from Syria. This is why I do not rule out any arrangements," Mr. Rabin said.

Golan Heights residents have benefited from 18 years of peace and security like no other Israelis have — not in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem or farm settlements bordering the West Bank," he added.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said the latest round of peace talks yielded "the best 10 days ever in Israeli-Syrian relations."

"In the 44 years since the founding of Israel there have never been 10 days like these in Syrian-Israeli relations," Mr. Peres told Israeli Television's Arabic service.

"From the peace standpoint these have been the best 10 days ever. We

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## Bank of Jordan hopes to reopen W. Bank branches, add new ones

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Bank of Jordan, a prominent Jordanian private-sector bank, hopes to resume and expand its operations in the occupied West Bank by reopening three branches closed in 1967 and setting up four more, a senior official of the bank said Friday.

"We have received the green light from Central Bank of Jordan (CBI) and hope to receive formal approval in the next two weeks after clearing certain technical points," the official told the Jordan Times.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the bank hopes to reopen its closed branches in Nablus, Jenin and Jericho in two months and set up new branches in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Hebron and Tulikarem.

The Jerusalem branch of the bank was also closed in 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank, but this branch is not expected to be reopened since the occupation authorities are resisting the move, according to informed banking sources.

The Arab Bank, Jordan's largest bank, has refused to reopen its branches in the West Bank unless permission was also given to reopen its Jerusalem branch. It was

not immediately known whether there was any change in the Arab Bank's stand.

According to the Bank of Jordan official, economic activities have picked up in the occupied territories to warrant the bank's presence there to serve the Palestinian community.

He said the branches would be operating under the rules and regulations set by the CBI.

No comment was available from the Central Bank Friday.

According to a Bank of Jordan official quoted by Reuters, "we will be reporting back and following the regulations of the Central Bank of Jordan and we will use Jordanian and foreign currencies in all our transactions."

Established in 1960, the Bank of Jordan is owned by a small group of shareholders and now has assets worth JD 246 million. It operates 32 branches in the Kingdom.

There has been no Israeli comment on the Bank of Jordan's move, which was first reported by Reuters on Thursday. But the occupation authorities, who acknowledge that Jordanian institutions have a role in the economy of the West Bank, are not expected to oppose the move.

multilateral phase of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. However, according to a senior source, there is no link between the peace process and the reopening of branches of Jordanian banks in the occupied territories.

"There has always been and will continue to be a strong role for Jordan in the Palestinian economy, if only because of the geography," the source said. "It is not a question of the beginning or end of the peace process."

"Economic and social relations between Jordan and the Palestinians have survived throughout the decades, including the Israeli occupation of the land, and will continue to do so," added the source. "Military and political activities might hamper them, but cannot cut such relationships."

"History has recorded the unbreakable links between Jordan and Palestinians," the source pointed out. "These links should be maintained since economic and social relations will survive no matter what happens in the political and military spheres."

According to an official quoted by Reuters, "there is a potential market in the occupied territories for Jordanian banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, contracting companies and others to work there."

"We will do our best to help them but not at the expense of indirectly normalising our ties with Israel before there is a final and comprehensive peace settlement."

## NAM stalled on Iraq, Bosnia

Combined agency dispatches

JAKARTA (Agencies) — Non-aligned members, seeking to show that their movement is still relevant now that the cold war is history, were locked in dispute late Friday over two contemporary challenges — Yugoslavia and Iraq.

Delegates to the summit of the 108-member body said officials could not agree how strongly to condemn attacks on Muslims in the breakaway Yugoslav republic of Bosnia.

Iraq's demand for support in its confrontation with the West proved equally awkward, with much of the Arab World lining up against it.

The delegates said five countries met Friday to discuss the Bosnia issue, locking out the six member Yugoslavia on the grounds that its status was still unclear.

They said Senegal, Egypt, Malaysia, Yugoslavia, Benin and Zimbabwe had been asked to form the special group on Bosnia after three amendments to the summit's draft text on Yugoslavia were tabled to the political committee.

Host Indonesia has tried to steer the movement towards addressing economic issues and the North-South wealth gap in its first summit since the collapse of communism.

But the issue of Yugoslavia has refused to go away even though members agreed before the summit to defer debate on whether to expel the founder member.

Muslim states are furious over attacks on Bosnian Muslims. African countries fear that ousting Belgrade would set a precedent for their own separatist groups.

The five countries failed to reach the consensus so prized by the movement and a "compromise text" from Ghana, as chairman of the session, was tabled Friday despite reservations.

"The text is too accommodation-

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## Allies find no proof Iraq attacking southerners

Combined agency dispatches

ALLIED PILOTS flying over southern Iraq have found no evidence that Iraqi forces are attacking civilians, but noted no sign a Shiite Muslim rebellion has been crushed, a U.S. commander said Friday.

Rear Admiral Brent M. Benoit, commander of the eight-ship USS Independence carrier battle group in the Gulf, reported no evidence to support reports that the Iraqi army has set fire to the reed-covered southern marshes to flush out Shiite rebels.

"We certainly have the capability to monitor that kind of activity," he told reporters. "I can't comment on the reports... because I have no information to support them."

Iraq's official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Thursday that the Iraqis were burning the marshes, sending up huge columns of smoke over the region which covers some 15,400 square

kilometres).

IRNA said Iraqi forces crushed rebel operations in the town of Al Qurnah, reputed site of the garden of Eden, where the Euphrates and Tigris rivers meet 65 kilometres north of Basra.

"If there were huge fires, we could probably see them from here," Adm. Benoit said. "The weather's been extremely good."

Since the Americans, British and French began enforcing a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq below the 32nd Parallel Aug. 27, allied aircraft have been monitoring air and ground activity.

Iraqi said Friday the West's no-fly zones over its territory were doomed and its eventual triumph over those enforcing them was inevitable.

"The cursed (U.S. President George) Bush's gambles in the north and the south will be lost in the wind," said the ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra.

"There is no force on earth that has the power to crush the will of

the Iraqis," the newspaper said. Iraq fears that the no-fly zone established by the Gulf war allies over much of the south might lead to a loosening of its authority in the area, just as a similar exclusion zone in the south put much of Iraqi Kurdistan beyond its reach.

"We emerged victorious... and victory will be ours in the future," the newspaper said.

The official press was full of articles marking the anniversary of border clashes that Iraq regards as the start of its 1980-1988 war with Iran. Major fighting began on Sept. 22 when Iraqi forces penetrated deep into Iranian territory.

Baghdad newspapers said it seemed Iran did not learn its lesson from defeats in the war. Babel, published by President Saddam Hussein's son Uday, warned Iraqis of what it called "the Persian snake."

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## Lebanese Christians observe third anti-election general strike

BEIRUT (R) — Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese Christians started a third three-day strike Friday to protest at the decision to go on with elections they regard as a plot to tighten Syria's grip on Lebanon.

Most businesses, supermarkets and shops closed in Christian areas of Beirut, but bakeries, hospitals and pharmacies were exempted from the strike.

The third and last phase of the parliamentary poll, the first such election in 20 years, is scheduled to take place in South Lebanon Sunday. North and east Lebanon, Beirut and Mount Lebanon voted on the two previous Sundays.

A coalition of Christian opposition groups wanted the elections postponed until thousands of Syrian troops withdraw from large parts of the country, possibly later this month. The Syrian-backed government went ahead regardless.

Most of the winning candidates so far have been pro-Syrian. The rest have been Muslim fundamentalists (see page 2).

The row over the elections has widened the Gulf between the country's communities and created the worst political crisis since Lebanon's civil war ended in 1990.

Voters in South Lebanon will close 23 deputies to the 128-seat national assembly.

About 180,000 Muslims, Christians and Druze live in Israel's self-declared "security zone" in South Lebanon which twists above the Israeli border from Mount Hermon to the Mediterranean.

But on Thursday, the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia decided to ban residents from voting further north in an area patrolled by U.N. troops.

Crossing points linking the zone to areas of the south were closed Friday and the SLA said

residents of the strip would not be allowed to leave the region until Monday morning.

SLA commander General Antoine Lahd told the militia-run Voice of the South on Friday: "The crossing was closed because most of the people do not want to vote. The security of the voters is not ensured as the government has been accusing some people of dealing with Israel."

Gen. Lahd, a Maronite Christian, appealed to residents of the south not to vote.

The government had planned to set up voting centres for residents of the zone in villages held by the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

The Council of Maronite Bishops, which opposes the polls, issued on Wednesday a statement saying the elections were a "formality" and did not reflect the wishes of the Lebanese.

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## World acted too late in Somalia — Hurd

MOGADISHU (R) — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Friday the world had been too slow in reacting to a famine in Somalia which threatens to kill nearly two million people.

"We were all collectively too slow," Mr. Hurd told a news conference after a three-hour tour of the shattered capital leading a European Community (EC) delegation which arrived from visits to South Africa and Kenya.

It was the most senior delegation to visit any part of Somalia since the country disintegrated into civil strife 20 months ago when rebel overthrew dictator Mohammed Siad Barre.

"Now at least we have a short but vivid impression," Mr. Hurd said after lightning visits to three feeding centres and a hospital

where hundreds of hungry and wounded fugitives from war and famine are sheltered.

Mr. Hurd, Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Ellemann-Jensen and Portuguese State Secretary Dora Barros visited both sides of the divided capital protected by the gunmen who wrecked it in a battle for control which ended with a shaky ceasefire in March.

They were escorted by dozens of gunmen in makeshift armoured jeeps through southern Mogadishu, loosely controlled by warlord Mohammed Farah Aided, then switched escorts when they crossed into the northern half of the capital, the fiefdom of self-styled President Ali Mahdi Muhammad.

Can war was one reason the international community was

slow to react to warnings that millions would die of starvation because of the breakdown of society through war and the effects of the worst drought in decades, Mr. Hurd said.

"It is easier to intervene in a natural disaster," said Hurd, whose country currently holds the rotating EC presidency.

The delegation's guards are employed by the United Nations to protect relief convoys but relief agencies blame gunmen like them for the looting of up to half of the food aid that reaches the capital and huge areas of disaster beyond the divided city.

Mr. Hurd said a security council resolution to send in 500 U.N. guards would ensure food reached the 4.5 million Somalis said to be in need.

Their first priority would be to protect the port, scene of frequent gunbattles and looting of aid and a warren of freelance gangs and bandits.

Mr. Hurd had a brief unscheduled meeting with Mr. Ali Mahdi when he arrived in northern Mogadishu. "We need help, help for everything," the self-declared president told his guest.

Mr. Ali Mahdi has agreed to the deployment of a total 3,500 troops but Gen. Aided says he opposes any more than 500 as a violation of sovereignty and a waste of money needed for aid.

Gen. Aided's backers waved protest banners as Mr. Hurd visited the wrecked Digfa Hospital

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## Afghan army launches intense Kabul arms clean-up

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan Defence Ministry forces have destroyed two militia tanks in a sweep to evict roving faction fighters from Kabul and confiscate illegal weapons, the Mjibadeen Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported Friday.

"No one can go in the streets with a weapon if they haven't got a Defence Ministry licence," AIP quoted sources in Kabul as saying.

"Troops loyal to Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud opened fire on two tanks of the formerly communist militia when they ignored orders to stop at a checkpoint in the northern Khairkhana suburbs late Thursday, destroying both, AIP said.

Several militiamen of the 70th division were injured.

Under a ceasefire that began Saturday to end three weeks of fighting between the Islamic government and the disident Hezb-e-Islami party, the militia must

start to withdraw from Kabul this week.

Kabul authorities say the militia no longer exists. Many have been incorporated into the army.

Mr. Massoud masterminded the fall of Kabul to the coalition of Mjibadeen forces in April by striking a deal with militia leader Rashid Dostum who defected with his powerful northern forces from the former communist government.

The severity of the Defence Ministry clean-up has made it difficult/impossible for the militia to venture out of barracks, AIP said. Many were reported to be leaving the city.

A previous attempt to clear the city of rival armed gangs in July ground to a halt in the face of stiff resistance.

"It looks as if they are serious this time," said one Afghan source. "If they are really taking on the militia that means they should be able to control the

situation in Kabul soon."

Since the Mujibadeen took over from the former communist rulers in April, the city has been divided into a patchwork of fiefdoms with rival fighters controlling neighbouring streets.

Motley bands of men who fought for 14 years occupy most intersections, from which occasional shots are fired. Men with guns stop vehicles and loot at random.

In another clash Thursday, Defence Ministry troops fired a rocket propelled grenade into an armoured personnel carrier that refused to stop, killing one militiaman and wounding six.

The coalition announced Tuesday that all armed units except those officially responsible for maintaining security should leave. It issued 250 weapons licences to each faction.

The Hezb has threatened to

renew its attacks unless the militia leave as agreed.

Government officials said the operation was going well and would be completed soon.

"People who resist will face a strict response," chief of national security Fakham said Thursday.

The Ministry of Defence estimated in July there were 25,000 armed men in Kabul, many backed by tanks and armoured vehicles.

Thousands of people were killed or injured in the three weeks of fighting last month and more than one-third of Kabul's population of 1.5 million have fled.

Rabbani seeks non-aligned aid, page 2.



## Afghan president blames 'criminals' for fighting, seeks non-aligned aid

**JAKARTA (R)** — President Burhanuddin Rabbani of Afghanistan, insisting that his embattled country faced a revolt by "criminals" and not a civil war, appealed to non-aligned nations Friday for reconstruction aid.

Mr. Rabbani, who heads an Islamic government that took power in April, said he wanted good relations with Russia but demanded that Moscow pay reparations for devastation caused by Soviet troops that backed the former Marxist regime in Kabul.

As a summit of the 108-nation Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) went into a fourth day, disputes over Yugoslavia and Iraq held up work on a 60-page statement due to be issued when the meeting ends Sunday, delegates said.

Mr. Rabbani, wearing the head-dress of Afghanistan's Mujahideen guerrillas, rebuked delegates who referred to a civil war in his country. Savage fighting around Kabul abated under a ceasefire last Saturday.

"The fact is that these recent events were not a civil war... this was a war waged by one specific person aided and abetted by a handful of criminal elements in a struggle against the legitimate government in defiance of the entire Afghan nation," he said.

Mr. Rabbani was referring to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the dissident fundamentalist

Hizb-e-Islami Party, whose forces have been shelling and rocketing Kabul from outside the city.

Mr. Rabbani said the ceasefire had been reached "after the attackers faced shameful defeat. We are fully confident that such attacks will always end in failure."

He called on the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Conference to provide immediate and large-scale assistance to his ravaged country and capital.

Fourteen years of conflict had killed one and a half million Afghans, maimed hundreds of thousands, driven five million into exile, destroyed six million cattle and 2,700 kilometres of roads and left behind over 10 million mines, he said.

Despite the atrocities he said had been committed by Soviet troops, over 100,000 of whom fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s, Mr. Rabbani offered an olive branch to the Russian government which took power when the Soviet Union collapsed last year.

"Afghanistan wishes to improve its relations with the Russian Federation... (it) wishes that the Russian Federation will participate actively in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and pay com-

ensation for the destruction caused by Soviet armed intervention," he said.

Mr. Rabbani thanked Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United States and European countries for support during the guerrilla war and said he wanted good relations with these countries as well as China, Japan and the ex-Soviet Central Asian states.

"The Islamic state of Afghanistan will pursue a line of positive and active neutrality," he declared.

As remaining non-aligned leaders addressed the summit, delegates said disputes over Iraq and Yugoslavia were holding up foreign ministers drafting the final communiqué.

"There is deadlock over Iraq and Yugoslavia. We couldn't agree on the wording despite two late-night sessions," an Arab delegate said. "We are racing against time."

Delegates said an Iraqi call for the lifting of a U.N. blockade against Iraq was rejected by nine countries — the six Gulf Cooperation Council states, Iran, Egypt and Syria.

They said these countries were also demanding a strong condemnation of Yugoslavia over "ethnic cleansing" of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina by Serb forces.

## Iraq accuses S. Arabia, Kuwait of bribing Syria to bar athletes

**By Sa'ad G. Hattar**  
*Special to the Jordan Times*

**AMMAN** — Iraq on Friday accused Gulf states of exerting "political and financial pressure over Syria" to exclude Iraqi athletes from joining the Seventh Arab tournament, which began in Syria Friday.

"Saudi Arabia and Kuwait paid \$7 million in bribes to Syria to ensure the exclusion of Iraq from the tournament," Ali Turki, head of the Iraqi team, told a press conference in Amman.

Though not officially invited by Syria, Iraq sent a 172-strong team covering eight games ranging from football to track and field. The team was not allowed into Syria.

Mr. Turki said the Iraqi athletes have been stuck on the Jordanian-Syrian border since Thursday evening, when Syria authorities denied their entry.

"We received instructions from Baghdad to stay at the border post until Arab League intervention pays off," Mr. Turki told reporters in Amman.

The Arab League, which sent an invitation to Iraq, has exerted efforts with Syria to allow Iraqi participation.

Mr. Turki noted that Syria's initial stance had been in favour of Iraqi participation until Gulf Arab states "pressured" Damascus into leaving Iraq out in the cold.

In their attempt to enter Syria, the Iraqi athletes were met with "harsh and painful

rejection," according to Mr. Turki, who dubbed the Syrian attitude as "a crucial precedent."

But efforts to cross the border failed after one-and-a-half hour bargaining with the chief of the border post, Colonel Hani Ismail.

"I have presidential orders not to let any Iraqi athlete into Syrian territories," Mr. Turki quoted the Syrian officer as saying. "He refused to compromise," Mr. Turki added.

Samir Mudallel, the head of the organising committee in Damascus, said he did not know of an Iraqi team and the Iraqis had not told him they planned to come.

Gulf sports officials said the Arab Sports Confederation had not invited Iraq.

## Foreign office protests sentences for Britons in Iraq

**LONDON (Agencies)** — Britain has sent a strong protest to Iraq against the "grotesque" sentences imposed on two British men charged with illegally entering the country.

Michael Wainwright, 42, was sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges he entered the country illegally during a bicycle trek. He is being held in a Baghdad jail with a second Briton, Paul Ride, 33, also accused of illegal entry while working in Kuwait, and sentenced to seven years.

The sentences have raised fears that Iraq might use the men as pawns to pressure Britain over its involvement in the "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq.

Foreign Office Minister Tristan Garel-Jones delivered Britain's protest of the sentences to the chief of the Iraqi embassy, Zuhair Ibrahim.

"It was made absolutely clear, too, that we regard grotesque sentences of this kind as postponing any possibility of Iraq's return to the international community and he was asked to convey our strongest concern to his administration forthwith," Mr. Garel-Jones said.

Mr. Ride was arrested when he crossed the border from Kuwait, and last week was jailed for seven years for illegal entry. Mr. Ride

had been working as a caterer in Kuwait.

Mr. Wainwright, a labourer from Sowerby Bridge in northern England, was cycling to Australia and was picked up in early May after crossing from Turkey into the Kurdish-controlled area in northern Iraq.

He has always maintained his innocence, saying that Iraqi guards allowed him into the country.

Mr. Wainwright's mother, Iris, said she had written to Saddam Hussein — "from one parent to another" — asking him to free her 42-year-old son.

"I want him to know my son is an ordinary Yorkshire lad," Mrs. Wainwright said. "Michael is no threat to Saddam Hussein. He is just a happy-go-lucky type."

The Foreign Office said the Red Cross had passed on information about the sentence which was handed down at a court session Monday after a trial last week.

The Foreign Office earlier said a Red Cross representative had visited Mr. Wainwright and Mr. Ride in Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison on Sunday and found them in good health and good spirits.

Both had prepared messages for their families which would be passed on once they had been cleared by Iraqi censors.

## Flash floods kill 450 in Hindu Kush

**KABUL (R)** — Flash floods in the Afghan Hindu Kush mountains north of Kabul have killed more than 450 people and at least 500 are missing, government officials and British aid workers say.

Britain's Halo Trust said the death toll could reach 3,000.

Torrents of mud and boulders crashed down three river valleys early Wednesday, sweeping away hundreds of houses, Defence Ministry spokesman Mohammad Yunis Qanuni said.

The tidal wave up to nine metres high thundered 30 kilometres down the Salang, Ghorband and Shurtul valleys. Officials earlier said two valleys were hit Thursday.

"With the floods striking at 3 a.m., most people were swept away or trapped in the mud," said the Halo Trust, an aid organisation helping to clear mines in the area left from Afghanistan's 14-year civil war.

It said it had reached two small areas where 450 people had been killed and a search had been mounted for 500 people missing downstream.

"Only 50 bodies were found," Mr. Qanuni said. "The rest have

not been found yet."

In the town of Gulbahaar at the junction of the Panjshir and Shurtul rivers, 75 kilometres north of Kabul, the floods broke through the bazaar at 6 a.m., sweeping away 10 buses full of passengers, the Halo Trust said.

They also destroyed rows of shops and the only bridge, the trust said.

Some villages lost as many as 200 houses, many newly rebuilt by refugees returning after Afghanistan's communist government fell to a coalition of Mujahideen forces in April.

Countless hectares of crops and of vital irrigation canals were destroyed or choked with mud and debris.

"The damage will cost millions of Afghans and we are looking into ways the government can help the region," Mr. Qanuni said.

Qari Obaid Ur-Rahman said he watched as trees and boulders swept downstream by the Shurtul River piled up on one side of the bridge and eventually broke it, inundating the bazaar.

Mr. Qari said he and some others climbed onto the roof of the mosque when they saw the

river rising.

"The people who saw it coming had time to get out but those who were asleep or didn't know were washed away."

"About 300 shops were hit and from each house about four or five people were carried away," he said.

Children from the local school managed to climb onto the mosque roof — except for three, aged about eight or nine, who were among those Mr. Qari saw disappear.

"We were pulling them out of the river," Mr. Qari said. "I saw all this with my own eyes."

"My shop was here," said pharmacist Abdul Anon, pointing to a patch of mud by his feet.

Timber house beams and boulders were snagged in the town's second bridge, over the panjshir river.

A shipping container, widely used as houses in place of those destroyed by war, was trapped in the fast flowing water under an arch.

A dead donkey floated among the debris and a couple of dozen young men were dredging through the water for bodies

## Indian party slams Iraq sanctions, mocks Major

**By Lamey Salisbury**  
*Special to the Jordan Times*

**AMMAN** — The Human Rights Party of India has condemned the U.N. economic blockade on Iraq and said that if sanctions continue the Security Council will be the "laughing stock" of the world's oppressed millions.

In a message to the Security Council, the group urged "for the sake of respect and functions of the U.N. to take quick pragmatic efforts for lifting the illegal economic sanctions against Iraq to save the suffering Iraqi people who are undergoing in the name of the Security Council."

The message, faxed to the Jordan Times, was written following the group's visit to Iraq.

The group said it was "shocked" to see children suffering from lack of food and medicine, adding that they were also surprised to learn that even the Iraqi health minister and his director general lacked drugs to cure the flu.

"The permission given for allowing import of medicines is only on paper and the practical difficulty in shipping and other stringent checkings and monitoring are a real hindrance and the medicines are not in the reach for saving lives."

"If this blockade is continued against Iraq the status of the Security Council will become a laughing stock in the minds of the oppressed millions all over the world," the message said.

According to the Iraqi-American Humanitarian Delegation, a non-governmental peace group that recently returned from Iraq, a breakdown in water supply and sewage has caused outbreaks of cholera, typhoid and other diseases.

The group said that according to doctors, 170,000 children have died since May and 900,000 others are malnourished.

According to Reuters there are reports that the executions of Iraqi merchants profiting from the sweeping U.N. trade ban has also caused a sharp drop in food imports, aggravating food shortages.

The Human Rights Party, no affiliation with the Indian government, injected irony in its statement when it referred to Britain's support of the U.S.-led allied flight ban over southern Iraq to protect dissident rebel Shiites from Iraqi attack.

"It is interesting to note the special affection which British Prime Minister John Major showed on Shiites to divide Iraq, forgetting... the demand of the people in Ireland in the North who are under British occupation."

"In Scotland and Wales also the nationalist movements have also not bothered Mr. Major."

The work of Mr. Major on human rights over Iraqi Shiites is like the "pot calling the kettle black."

The Human Rights Party is one of many India-based groups that have expressed concern over the plight of Iraq's 18 million people following the Gulf war.

## Sudanese rebel leader meets Egyptian officials

**CAIRO (R)** — A commander in the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is visiting Cairo in a bid to win Arab and Muslim acceptance, SPLA sources said Friday.

They told Reuters the unpublicised visit by Taher Bior as head of an SPLA-approved Islamic body was part of a new campaign to present the SPLA to Egypt and the Arab world as an alternative to Sudan's military rulers, who are closely linked to Muslim fundamentalists.

Diplomats said the visit is another sign of Cairo's deteriorating relations with its southern neighbour.

Egypt's secular government is concerned by a surge of Muslim fundamentalism in the Middle East and has accused Sudan of running guerrilla training camps for Muslim extremists and attempting to destabilise the region.

The SPLA, in Sudan's mainly Christian and animist south, has been fighting a succession of governments in Khartoum since 1984 to overthrow what it sees as domination by the Arab, Muslim north of the country.

June peace talks between the rebels and Sudan's government broke down when rebels refused to accept the imposition of Islamic Law on non-Muslims in the south.

Mr. Bior heads the Islamic Council for a New Sudan, founded by the SPLA last year, and has seen officials at Egypt's Ministry of Religious Affairs and the state-approved Al Azhar Islamic University since arriving in Cairo last week, the SPLA sources said.

SPLA spokesman Garang Deng in Nairobi told Reuters that Mr. Bior, a devout Muslim who has served as an SPLA field commander, would also visit Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates and maybe Algeria and Tunisia on his tour.

"Taher Bior is now on a mission to the Middle East to tell these countries (Sudan's civil war) has nothing to do with being anti-Islam," said Mr. Deng.

The Egyptian Foreign Ministry declined to comment on the visit. SPLA sources in Cairo say Egypt issued an open invitation to SPLA leader John Garang when a delegation visited about a month ago.

## MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

**King Hassan says he met Rabin, Dayan**

**PARIS (R)** — Morocco's King Hassan acknowledged publicly Thursday he had met Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin secretly in 1976 and had previously held secret talks with the late Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Dayan. Asked whether he had met Mr. Rabin before, he said: "In 1976, yes he was the second. I had previously met Dayan." In an interview with France's Antenne-2 television station, the king said there were "encouraging developments in the Middle East, including Mr. Rabin's election in June. The Moroccan leader's first public meeting with an Israeli leader was in 1986 when he met then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres at his summer palace in Ifrane."

**Two Egyptian policemen wounded in attack**

**ASSIUT, Egypt (R)** — A policeman's leg was hit Friday by a hand grenade hurled by Muslim militants at a police station in Upper Egypt, security sources said. A second, unscripted policeman was also wounded in the leg in the attack in Kafi Sarhan, a village in Assiut province about 325 kilometres south of Cairo. At least 40 people have been killed in Egypt since March in a militant-related violence, mostly in Assiut province where there have been about a dozen attacks against police and Christians.

**Cyprus government protests over settlers**

**NICOSIA (R)** — The Cyprus government has protested to the United Nations over new settlers in the breakaway Turkish-Cypriot north. Two textile companies there have been allowed to hire 100 Pakistani labourers and 51 Bulgarian Muslims arrived Monday seeking political asylum and jobs. "We are denouncing these acts which are nothing else but attempts to create new facts on the ground," said Akis Fantis, spokesman for the internationally recognised government which controls about two-thirds of the island.

**Iranian president to visit China**

**BEIJING (AP)** — China announced Thursday that Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani will pay an official visit to China from Sept. 9-12. Mr. Rafsanjani has been invited by his Chinese counterpart, President Yang Shangkun, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wu Jianmin told a weekly news briefing. Mr. Yang travelled to Iran last year on the first official visit to that country by a Chinese head of state since the 1979 Islamic revolution there. China was a major arms supplier to Iran during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. China also has sold nuclear technology to Iran, but says it was only for peaceful purposes and that the two countries are not involved in a nuclear weapons programme.

**Djibouti closes borders for referendum**

**DJIBOUTI (R)** — Djibouti closed its borders with Ethiopia and Somalia for three days from Thursday as the Red Sea state prepared to vote Friday on a multi-party constitution which the government hopes will end months of political unrest. President Hassan Gouled Aptidon appealed Wednesday for reconciliation in Djibouti, where Afar rebels have been fighting government troops in the north on and off for 10 months. "The time has come to put an end to the quarrels," Mr. Gouled, president of the former French colony since 1977, said in a speech broadcast on television and radio. An Interior Ministry statement said the law 3 borders were closing because of the referendum. It gave no full explanation but analysts said it was to stop thousands of Djibouti's main Somali and Afar tribes in neighbouring countries from trying to vote. No traffic will move on the lifeline railway linking Djibouti port with Ethiopia and the normally busy roads to Somalia have been closed. The new draft constitution, drawn up by an all-party committee, allows opposition parties after 11 years of a one-party system and creates a constitutional council and an independent high court. Under the new constitution the courts will be able to put the president and government ministers on trial.

## Hizbollah gains in Lebanese polls stun Christians

**By Michael Kuli**  
*Reuters*

**BEIRUT** — A major victory for Muslim fundamentalists in Lebanon's controversial elections has dismayed the Christians, who fear losing control of the country they see as a haven in a sea of Islam.

In the two phases of voting held since Aug. 23, eight Muslim fundamentalists have won seats in the 128-member national assembly. They are expected to win more in the third and last phase of voting Sunday.

It is the first time since independence in 1943 that fundamentalists who may now form a substantial block in the new legislature, have roads into mainstream political life.

Their success has shocked moderate Muslims. The Christians, who boycotted the

elections a ploy by neighbouring Syria to consolidate its grip on the country, are stunned.

"This time they won few seats, next they might win even more and later more and we will end up being ruled by people who want to turn Lebanon into a radical Islamic state," said Edward Qazzi, a carpenter in Christian east Beirut.

The pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim Hizbollah (Part of God) group gained four seats in the eastern Bekaa Valley and two officials of the Sunni Muslim Islamic grouping became members of parliament in the northern port city of Tripoli.

In the capital, two fundamentalists took advantage of a general boycott and won seats last Sunday.

A senior Christian religious leader said a strong presence of radical Muslims in the half-Christian half-Muslim parlia-

ment could increase tension between the two communities, which tended to back opposite sides in the civil war of 1975 to 1990.

"Coexistence between moderate Christians and Muslims has been fragile for the past few decades. I wonder what kind of coexistence there will be when extremists take over?" said the leader, who did not wish to be identified.

Peace came to Lebanon only after the previously Christian-dominated political system was reformed under an agreement reached in the Saudi resort of Taif in 1989. It divided power equally between the two religious groups.

The Muslims say they should have more power because they form a majority among the 3.5 million Lebanese. The Christians say they should keep power for fear of Muslim persecution in the religiously tense

Middle East.

The respected newspaper Al Nahar quoted Speaker of Parliament Hussein Hussein as saying the election of more than one militant would upset the delicate sectarian balance.

Mr. Hussein, a Shiite Muslim, was almost defeated in the polls in east Lebanon when candidates supported by Hizbollah won against most of his list of candidates.

"The rebellious (fundamentalists) have entered the assembly at a time when those (moderates) who established the system are leaving it," leading Muslim commentator Talal Salman said in the daily newspaper Al Safir.

But some political analysts doubt the strong radical Muslim presence in parliament will last long.

They say the success of the fundamentalists is a public reaction against the failure of

the moderate Syrian-backed government to solve the country's economic problems.

"Despite the wave of support for fundamentalism in the Middle East and despite their strong presence in Lebanon, the people voted for the radical leaders because the moderates and especially the government has failed," a leading Christian politician said.

All the governments which have ruled Lebanon over the past six years have failed to revive the economy, once one of the strongest in the region. The Lebanese pound has lost more than 99 per cent of its value since 1975.

With strong Iranian backing, Hizbollah has been supporting hundreds of thousands of impoverished Shiite Lebanese for a decade by setting up hospitals, factories, schools and other social services. It even pays salaries.

**JORDAN TELEVISION**  
Tel: 7711-19

**PROGRAMME TWO**  
18:00 — Les Aventures de Bosco  
18:10 — Opération Mozart  
18:20 — News in French  
18:35 — Fenêtre sur  
18:40 — News in Hebrew  
18:50 — News in Arabic  
19:00 — Super Blockers  
19:10 — Encounter  
19:20 — News in English  
20:00 — Mini series: Gass Kool

**PRAYER TIMES**  
06:00 — Fajr  
06:05 — (Sunrise) Dhuha  
12:35 — Noon  
16:00 — Asr  
19:01 — Maghrib  
20:21 — Isha

**CHURCHES**  
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedieh, Tel. 610740  
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 657875  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440  
St. Basil Church Tel. 661757  
Thomistic Church Tel. 622556  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

**Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543**  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Assyrian International Church Tel. 683325  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 611255  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 623624, 649532  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 676691

**WEATHER**  
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.  
The heatwave which afflicted Jordan will start to ease gradually as of tonight. Wind will be easterly light, changing to northwesterly tomorrow. In Amman, which will be southerly moderate to fresh and sea calm.

**Mis./Max. temp.**  
Amman 22/16  
Azraq 26/19  
Dahesh 20/17  
Jordan Valley 25/19  
Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 38, Azraq 42, Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Azraq 32 per cent.

**JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR**

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

**NIGHT DUTY**  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Walid Sawahneh 779971  
Dr. Salwan Al Dabbasi 707071  
Dr. Khalil Al Jabali 740740  
Dr. Ahmad Dabbas 791237  
Firm pharmacy 661912  
Ferdous pharmacy 773336  
Al Asma pharmacy 670355  
Naboukhi pharmacy 626672  
Al Salam pharmacy 636739  
Yacoub pharmacy 644945  
Shaykh pharmacy 637660

**DEBES:**  
Dr. Mahmoud Saeed (—)  
Al Shams pharmacy (278255)

**ZARQA:**  
Dr. Mubashir Hijawi (—)  
Khalid pharmacy 963417

**EMERGENCIES**  
Food Control Centre 637111

**Civil Defence Department 661111**  
Civil Defence Immediate: 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency: 199  
Rescue Police: 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade: 891228  
Blood Bank: 775121  
Highway Police: 843402  
Traffic Police: 893980  
Public Security Department: 638321  
Mulla, J. Amman: 630140  
Patriotic, Shamsani: 664171/4  
Shamsani Hospital: 669313  
University Hospital: 845045  
Al-Mustashfi Hospital: 667271/9  
The Islamic, Abadi: 666213/7  
Al-Ahl, Abadi: 664164/6  
Rafan, Al-Mahajra: 777101/3  
Army, Majid: 775112/6  
Queen Abla Hospital: 891617/5  
Queen Abla Hospital: 892240/9  
Amal Hospital: 674155

**ZARQA:**  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)963323  
Zarqa National Hospital (09)307569  
Ba Siba Hospital (09)586332  
Al-Basm, Amman: (09)969950

**IRBID:**  
Princess Beasm Hospital (02)275535  
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775  
Ibn Al-Nafiz Hospital (02)247100

**HOSPITALS**  
AMMAN:  
Hamam Medical Centre 813813/32  
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816  
Abdullah Maternity, J. Amn 640412  
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362  
Mulla, J. Amman 630140  
Patriotic, Shamsani 664171/4  
Shamsani Hospital 669313  
University Hospital 845045  
Al-Mustashfi Hospital 667271/9  
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Queen Abla Hospital 891617/5  
Queen Abla Hospital 892240/9  
Amal Hospital 674155

**FOR THE TRAVELLER**  
**QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**  
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information Department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

**ARRIVALS**  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
06:00 — Amman, Beirut (RJ)  
06:05 — Amman, Doha (RJ)  
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## Anglican bishop says Arabs should only accept 'honourable' peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East Samir Qafity, who is spearheading Christian community efforts to support Jordan's drive to renovate the holy places in Arab Jerusalem has said the "Arabs should not lose the chance of peace in the Middle East region offered through the current talks in Washington."

However, he said, in a lecture delivered here Thursday, the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular can only accept a just solution that would guarantee peace with honour for all people in the region.

Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif and Minister of Health Aref Bataineh were among the audience listening to the lecture, organised by the Rotary Club in Jordan at the Amman Philadelphi Hotel.

The current Palestinian uprising was launched nearly four and a half years ago from the Palestinian Arab churches and mosques in order to rid the country of Israeli occupation that has caused so much sufferings to the Palestinian people," said Bishop Qafity.

So far, the uprising has cost the Palestinian people 1030 martyrs who fell in the course of resisting the Israeli forces, while 15270 men and women have been arrested during the past four years, the bishop added.

He said the Israeli authorities have imposed 11410 days of curfew on Palestinian towns and villages and refugees camps since the eruption of the intifada in December 1987 and Israeli troops have cut down 137,800 olive trees owned by Arab farmers.

The bishop went on to relate instances of the tragedies of the Palestinian people whom, he said, have been supported in their just struggle by people from around the world.

Referring to the Gaza Strip, Bishop Qafity said that Israel has built 18 Jewish settlements there despite the fact that it is one of the most densely populated areas of the world.

Gaza residents, estimated at 750,000 people, lack the minimum level of medical services, he said. He said there is only one Arab hospital with 800 beds in Gaza, in addition to an Anglican

church 100-bed hospital with limited capabilities.

Bishop Qafity said a joint Muslim and Christian council directly supervises the affairs of the holy sites in Palestine and strives to protect their Arab character in the face of Israel's Judaisation attempts. The 'Christians and Muslims of the holy land are united in their resistance to Israel's expansionist and Judaisation plans in the holy city,' he said.

On Wednesday, Bishop Qafity donated JD 3000 to help finance the renovation of the Dome of the Rock in Arab Jerusalem, saying that the contribution was raised by the Arab Christian community in Jerusalem as a symbolic donation to support Jordan's efforts in this regard.

Earlier, the Anglican bishop met with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and expressed the Christian community's willingness to contribute towards the renovation of the Dome of the Rock.

Several heads of the Christian Communities in Jordan attended the lecture.

## UNRWA expands education services

AMMAN (J.T.) — Thousands of Palestinian students attending United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools at refugee camps will benefit from the agency's decision to expand its educational system, as of the academic year 1992-93.

UNRWA has decided to upgrade its school system to include a tenth grade as of the academic year 1992-93, under a project whose costs are estimated at \$1 million, and some 11,000 Palestinian students who reach this level will be able to receive their education at its schools. Previously, those students had to leave UNRWA schools upon finishing the ninth grade and complete the three remaining school years at government and other schools.

"We have constructed about 60 rooms, rented 23 and modified another 40 to accommodate the additional students," said Mr. Atiyeh Mahmoud, UNRWA's field education officer in Jordan in a recent statement.

In addition, the agency purchased \$25,000 worth of computers for the tenth year students, and is employing 370 new teachers, the statement said.

## King calls on Jordanians to channel costs of celebrating his recovery to charity works

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has called on the Jordanian people to divert funds to be spent on celebrating his recovery from a recent operation to charity works and helping the poor in Jordan.

In a letter to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Thursday, King Hussein said the feelings of joy could best be expressed by helping the poor during the celebrations of Prophet Mohammad's birthday, which will be marked next week.

King Hussein who is still recuperating from an operation which he had at Mayo Clinic at the United States, last month, voiced his deep gratitude to the Jordanian people for their expression of joy over his recovery.

"I have been following up with great pride and appreciation the noble feelings of the Jordanian family, expressing joy and thanking God for the success of my operation and my recovery from illness, and I have received a flood of cables and bouquets of flowers from the Jordanian people who placed notices in the local press and called by telephone to express their great joy," said the King in his message.

"I take deep pride in my Jordanian family and appreciate their noble feelings, but I do wish that

the expensive cost of all the manifestations of joy be handled in the spirit of Islam and the nation's noble traditions, by being channelled to charity, benefiting the needy people of Jordan," the King said.

He said that the Jordanian people can best express their joy through giving alms to the poor during the celebrations of Prophet Mohammad birthday anniversary.

He said: "Let your celebration of the coming feast be manifested through help to the orphans and the needy."

In reply, the Regent said he has already instructed Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi to supervise the channelling of the cost of the public's celebrations of the King's recovery in accordance with his desires and directives.

"Your people have been expressing noble feelings of allegiance to you since the moment you left Jordan, and have been constantly following up the process of your treatment waiting for your return home," said the Regent in his reply message.

"I am pleased to convey to the Jordanian people your royal directives for channelling funds to be spent on rejoicings over your recovery towards charity and I



am confident that the Jordanian people will respond most favourably to your desire and wishes," said the Crown Prince.

## ESCWA ends its meetings in Amman with a call for increased inter-Arab trade

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Encouraging increased inter-Arab trade through setting up an Arab common market, supporting Palestinians and Syrians living under Israeli occupation and extending continued assistance to the rebuilding of Lebanon were some of the decisions taken by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which ended its 16th annual session in Amman Thursday.

Decision on where to set up the permanent base for the 13-member U.N. agency was put off until next year, when a ministerial meeting to be held in Beirut will review formal detailed offers from Jordan and Lebanon, ESCWA Executive Secretary Tayseer Abdul Jabbar told a press conference.

No decision was taken on setting up a United Nations centre for space technology, although the issue was discussed by the ESCWA meeting in Amman, Dr. Abdul Jabbar said. Jordan is one of the countries which have offered to host such a centre, which will be affiliated with the U.N. Department of Space Technology. Syria, Iraq and Oman expressed interest in hosting the proposed centre.

Resolutions adopted during the five-day meeting of ESCWA, which temporarily moved its headquarters to Amman last year following the Gulf crisis, included a call on member states to come up with ideas on setting up an Arab common market.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar pointed out that trade among ESCWA member countries — the six Arab Gulf states, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine and Jordan — represents only seven per cent of the total trade of these countries with other markets.

The ESCWA secretary-general admitted that there could be no magic solutions to improve regional cooperation in view of strains in political relations among some of the ESCWA member states. But, he stressed that "mutual interests" of the countries involved would make it inevitable, sooner or later, for them to cooperate with each other.

Manpower movement in the region is one of the important areas affected by the strain in relations. Jordan alone has found itself on the receiving end of up to 250,000 of its expatriate workforce returning home in the wake of the Gulf crisis, when conflicting political positions led to a rift in the Kingdom's relations with the Gulf states.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar said the Amman meetings did not lead to any agreements in streamlining manpower movement and noted that it was not an issue which was limited to ESCWA but included the broader Arab League forum and related agencies.

"This is going to be with us for some time," he said, indirectly acknowledging the stance of some of the labour-importing countries. "We are going to raise it as a major issue," he said, adding that ESCWA was giving

the subject the importance it deserves and would bring it up again at an Arab population conference to be held in Jordan in April 1993.

In the meantime, ESCWA will continue to extend technical assistance to countries affected by the displacement of their expatriate workforce from the Gulf states with a view to helping them cope with high unemployment and social problems.

The ESCWA conference adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a regional fund for reconstruction and development. Asked what were the chances for success in creating such a fund, given the rift among some of the member states of ESCWA, Dr. Abdul Jabbar said he did not want to "prejudge the outcome" of the call and expressed optimism that the situation would be more conducive to such cooperation in the future.

Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) stayed away from the conference. Dr. Abdul Jabbar said he had not received any formal communication from them, explaining their absence.

In any event, he said it is the choice of individual member states to attend meetings or not.

The ESCWA conference, the first since the Gulf crisis scrambled the political and economic map of the region, reviewed medium and long-term economic and social development plans for the region and came up with following:

— An endorsement of the Arab

Israeli peace process based on U.N. resolutions and allowing the Palestinian people to have a say in their use of their natural resources and developing their economy, suffering under Israeli occupation.

— A call for strengthening the agency's role in technical activities, within its mandate in the multilateral phase of the peace process.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar said it was "premature" to discuss any concrete projects with ESCWA involvement in Palestinian self-government arrangements.

Key theme in the bilateral Israeli-Palestinian talks — but noted that water sharing and regional environmental protection were two areas where ESCWA was involved in the multilateral phase of negotiations.

— A declaration that 1994-2003 will be the "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Decade for Western Asia" and a recommendation that a regional fund be set up for.

— An endorsement of ESCWA assistance — technical and advisory — to the reconstruction of Lebanon.

— A call to prepare detailed studies on the impact of single European market on the ESCWA region with a view to adopting necessary action.

— An endorsement of a planned study on the economic and social conditions of Palestinians and Syrians living in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The studies will be presented to the next session of ESCWA.

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Regent condoles Ghoul family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, delegated Friday the Deputy director of his office, Abdullah Kanaan, to condole Al Ghoul family over the death of Abdul Fatah Ahmad, brother of Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director Major-General Adif Al Ghoul.

#### Jordan to attend IPU meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian parliamentary delegation, to be headed by the Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, left for Stockholm Friday to take part in the meetings of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Association of the National Parliaments Secretaries-General due to be held in the Swedish capital Sept. 6-12. Participants will discuss the international economic and political situation and means of supporting moves to democratisation and respect for human rights in the Third World. They will also discuss means of advancing the status of women and environment problems. The delegation comprises Lower House members Majed Khalifeh and Ouseim Obaidat in addition to Parliament's Secretary General Saleh Al Zu'bi. Mr. Lawzi, the delegation head, will join the delegation later.

#### Ensour begins visit to Cairo

AMMAN (Petra) — Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour left Amman for Cairo Friday on a several-day official visit to Egypt. Dr. Ensour will chair the Jordanian side to the meetings of the Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee due to start Saturday. During his stay, the minister will hold talks with Egyptian officials on economic and commercial ties between the two countries.

#### AFM head to attend Abu Dhabi meetings

AMMAN (Petra) — Director General of Amman Financial Market (AFM) Umayya Touqan Thursday left for Abu Dhabi to take part in the 16th ordinary session of the board of governors of Arab central banks and the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), which start there today. The session will discuss a unified Arab economic report for the year 1992, which includes a special chapter on Arab financial markets, and other subjects on the session's agenda. Attending the meetings will be governors of Arab central banks and monetary institutions, the Arab League's assistant secretary general for economic affairs, the president of the Arab Banks Union, the president of Arab Exchange Markets Union and the director general of the AMF.

#### Aviation college reviews programmes

AMMAN (Petra) — Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority Ahmad Juweiber Friday chaired a meeting of the board of directors of the Queen Noor Technical College for Civil Aviation and discussed with them a number of issues of interest to the college. Talks focused on the new major disciplines which the college will be teaching during the current academic year and the educational fees for students wishing to specialise in telecommunication engineering. Mr. Juweiber pointed out that the college was contemplating an ambitious plan to develop its programmes and curricula through participating in an international air flight training programme aimed at upgrading the level of training in civil aviation in the developing world and providing unique training centres and teaching certain majors approved by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. This in turn will convert the college into a regional training centre for the Middle East countries.

#### Jordan to attend talks on wet lands

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan is taking part in a meeting on the optimal use of wet lands due to open in the Netherlands Saturday. The meeting will discuss the establishment of a unit to evaluate the environmental effects on wetlands at a total cost of 40,000 Swiss francs. Jordan will be represented at the meeting by Director of the Land Protection Department of the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs and the Environment Yassin Al Zu'bi.

#### Jordan opens fair in Casablanca

AMMAN (Petra) — The third Jordanian industrial fair was opened in Casablanca, Morocco, Thursday. The two-week fair, which is organised by the Jordanian Exports Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCCO), aims to acquaint the Moroccan public with development witnessed in Jordanian industrial products. A total of 66 Jordanian companies and firms are participating in the fair.

#### Yemeni police delegation ends visit

AMMAN (Petra) — A Yemeni police delegation left Amman Thursday at the end of a week-long visit during which it met with senior Public Security Department (PSD) officers. The delegation also visited several training institutes and was familiarised with training programmes. The visit aimed to benefit the Yemeni police with the PSD experience.

#### 40 attend course in voluntary work

AMMAN (Petra) — A two-week training course for workers in voluntary societies in Jordan will start here Saturday. Taking part in the course, which is being organised by the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) in cooperation with the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, are 40 workers. The course aims at upgrading the administrative performance of workers in voluntary societies throughout the Kingdom. Participants will listen to lectures about the main elements of successful voluntary organisations, and the major duties of the voluntary societies' boards, methods of planning, concept of leadership in administration and improving monitoring and management of financial activities.

## 12,000 students accepted at Jordan's state universities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Nearly 12,000 students will be admitted at Jordan's four state universities in the 1992-93 academic year, which begins Sept. 19, 1992, according to Dr. Mohammad Maqousi, chairman of a committee coordinating students admission among the four universities.

Addressing a press conference Thursday, Dr. Maqousi said the first admission list contains the names of 9070 male and female students, chosen from a total of 19835 students who have applied to the four universities. The lowest average grade accepted was 70 per cent in the tawjibi certificate, and it was accepted by Muta University, Dr. Maqousi said.

The first list, he said, contained students on scholarships from the Ministry of Education, the armed forces and the Royal Court. For those on scholarship, the lowest average grade was 65 per cent, he added.

Dr. Maqousi said that 10 per cent of the total number of seats at the four universities have been assigned for students from other Arab countries and the occupied West Bank.

The first list of names did not include the students who will enrol at the military wing of Muta University or evening courses at Muta University, and the educa-

tion programme at the University of Jordan and Muta University, Dr. Maqousi said.

Jordan has four state universities: The University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, Muta University and the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST). The country has five other private universities that have been operating over the past three years.

According to Dr. Maqousi, a total of 3611 students have been accepted by the University of Jordan in the first list, 3055 at Yarmouk University, 1291 at Muta University and 892 at JUST.

Dr. Maqousi said that the scores of 994 students in the tawjibi examinations were 90 per cent, compared with 613 in 1991. He said that limited numbers were accepted at the four universities to study medicine and engineering, saying that the scores of those accepted at the University of Jordan's Faculty of Medicine were no less than 97.7 per cent, and those at the Engineering Faculty 91.4 per cent.

He said that competition for seats at the four universities was very tough this year, noting that 104 students 95 per cent average grades in the tawjibi certificate, this year, compared to 53 in the past year.



British Ambassador to Jordan Patrick Evers (left) and Ministry of Planning Secretary General Sawan Toukan Thursday sign a memorandum of understanding under which Britain granted Jordan \$50,000 to help compensate farmers for losses sustained during the last winter season (Petra photo).

## British grant to help farmers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Britain has granted Jordan \$50,000 to help compensate farmers for losses sustained during last winter's snow storms.

According to a memorandum of understanding signed Thursday, the donation will be used to purchase fruit tree saplings to be distributed to local farmers for nominal fees.

The memorandum was signed by the British Ambassador to Jordan Patrick Evers and Ministry of Planning Secretary General Sawan Toukan.

A series of snow storms in the past winter season damaged vast areas of farmlands in different parts of the country, and the floods, mainly those occurring in the Jordan Valley, devastated large areas of lands planted with fruit trees and vegetables.

The government has since set up a special ministerial committee to offer soft loans to farmers and allocated funds for the restoration of roads, bridges and culverts damaged during the storms.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### Exhibitions

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Adnan Al Hela at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artist Ali Rikha at Alla Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Rakan Dabboush at the Royal Cultural Centre.

### CORRECTION

In a story headlined Islamic groups seen facing 'real test,' in the Jordan Times issue of Sept 3-4, 1992, a proofreading error led to a distorted reading of a certain paragraph. The paragraph read: "Some analysts asserted that the latest case may cast doubt on Islamic Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat flatly rejects," instead of reading: "Some analysts asserted that the latest case may cast doubt on Islamic fundamentalists' commitment to the democratic process, a charge Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat flatly rejects."

## Swedish delegation ends visit to Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — A Swedish parliamentary delegation Friday ended a three-day visit to the Kingdom during which it held talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and other officials on the Middle East peace process, the impact of the Gulf crisis on Jordan and Sweden.

The delegation was headed by Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs at the Swedish Parliament Pierre Schori who earlier described his visit to the Kingdom as part of "an important mission" assigned to him by the Swedish Parliament.

Even though Sweden's role in promoting peace in the Middle East has been "modest," Mr. Schori told Jordan Television on Wednesday, the delegation's visit to the region aimed to "underline Sweden's interest in contributing to the peace process."

Mr. Schori said his country supported the achievement of just peace in the region, expressing belief that the present Israeli government was more serious than its predecessor about solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Swedish delegation, which met with the Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat, rapporteur of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Upper House of Parliament and Acting Foreign Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif, also voiced Sweden's support for Jordan's policies in dealing with the humanitarian and economic consequences of the Gulf crisis.

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## Clouds shift, ground remains firm

THE 10-DAY recess that the parties to the sixth round of peace negotiations have taken at the request of the Israeli side may suggest that the Washington talks have reached a turning point. Notwithstanding the optimism generated by the initial contacts between the Israeli negotiating teams and their Arab counterparts and the dissipation of this premature euphoria, later on, the two weeks spent in the American capital may have produced results tangible enough to prompt the Israeli party at least to seek a break for the purpose of conducting consultations with its government. In this vein, most of the talk has centred on the Israeli-Syrian peace parleys. Israel has signalled for the first time that U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 is also applicable to the Syrian Golan Heights. The Syrian side has proposed terms for an eventual comprehensive peace treaty with Israel that purport to take into consideration Israeli security needs while at the same time insisting on total Israeli withdrawal from Syrian territories occupied in 1967. This new Syrian stance has apparently prompted the Israeli side to realise that there is enough substance in the new Damascus posture to conclude that a breakthrough in the Syrian-Israeli peace talks is possible.

On the other fronts, however, no real progress has been noted with both the Jordanian and Palestinian peace delegations expressing additional doubts about the real intentions of the new Israeli government under the leadership of Yitzhak Rabin. These developments have reinforced the assumption that the centre of gravity of the Arab-Israeli peace talks might be shifting to the Syrian-Israeli dimension where increased efforts are being made to break the hardest nut of all in the Arab-Israeli peace talks. This also suggests that the Israeli side must have concluded that achieving a breakthrough in the Israeli-Syrian peace parley would usher in additional breakthroughs on the remaining negotiating fronts sooner or later. Fortunately, though, Damascus is on record as seeking a comprehensive peace terms affecting all the Arab parties. Whether this means that the Syrian government will make its signature on any eventual peace treaty with the Israelis contingent on other Arab parties attaining similar results or would be satisfied with something less (on these remaining fronts) is something that needs to be observed with precision.

So far though, there are no indications that any of the Arab parties is seeking an independent deal with the Israeli side and all the Arab parties have confirmed time and again that a comprehensive peace affecting all the Arab parties to the ongoing peace negotiations is something that is not negotiable. There is no reason to doubt that this unequivocal Arab commitment is still standing. After all, it is the only viable way to achieve honourable and just peace terms for the entire Arab-Israeli conflict.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE ISRAELI side to the Washington peace parley has failed so far to come up with concrete proposals or ideas aimed at ending the Arab-Israeli conflict in implementation of U.N. resolutions, despite the lapse of two weeks of talks, said Al Ra'i daily. The paper said that the Israeli foreign minister's recent statements, which were optimistic, did not fall into place since nothing at the talks has been achieved. The release of a limited number of Arab detainees from Israeli jails is insignificant considering the thousands of Arabs still in jail for no crime except expressing the will to resist occupation of their homeland, said the daily. It said that there is no justification for any optimism over the peace negotiations so far, and all the statements coming from the Israeli minister or other Israeli officials are clearly aimed at smoothing the ground for the U.S. Congress to grant Israel the loan guarantees it has been seeking, the paper argued. It said that once the loan guarantees have been secured, Israel is bound to take a more adamant position with regard to the peace settlement with the Arabs and it would never accept the idea of implementing U.N. Security resolutions 242 and 338, on which the peace process has been founded.

A COLUMNIST Al Ra'i daily lauded the efforts of a national committee trying to set up a national centre for the treatment of needy cancer patients, calling on all citizens to contribute generously towards this vital project. Fakhri Kawa said that the projected centre gives new hope to the cancer patients, not only of Jordan where the number is on the increase, but also in neighbouring Arab states. The writer said that the committee is making efforts to raise money from the rich people for this centre which will offer free-of-charge services to the poor patients of Jordan; and the committee is to be commended for this attitude because by doing so it is enhancing the concept of social solidarity. The writer said that smoking has been proved to be responsible for heart and cancer diseases and smokers, who are causing the sickness to themselves and to the other members of society, should be made to pay for the treatment of patients. The writer proposed that the government impose a 10 fils extra charge on each packet of cigarettes sold in Jordan so as to create a permanent source of income for the projected centre, thus saving the committee a great deal of effort and ensuring continuous financing for this vital project.

# Granting the loan guarantees violates law, undermines attainment of a peace settlement

Following is an open letter to the members of the U.S. House of Representatives with reference to the granting of unconditional loan guarantees to Israel, addressed by Abdul Jawad Saleh, director of the Jerusalem Centre for Development Studies, Division of Human Rights.

The recent decision by the incumbent U.S. administration to grant the government of Israel the \$10 billion loan guarantees without first securing a total freeze on settlement building, in the midst of the peace process and in the context of stated U.S. Middle East policy and the current economic situation in the U.S., is in our opinion a misguided and counterproductive one.

Despite promises made to the American people that the granting of the guarantees would cost the American taxpayer virtually nothing, the reality is that they will have to pay \$350 million just to secure the loans for Israel. This is in addition to the already heavy financial burden of the annual \$3.4 billion economic and military aid to Israel, at a time when the U.S.'s own budget suffers from a massive deficit.

With other legislative initiatives, which provide for immediate transfer of the Economic Support Fund and the Military Assistance Grant, the U.S. incurs massive losses, such as \$86 million in 1991 in the form of lost interest.

Further, the Cranston Amendment explicitly states that the "the funds provided in annual appropriations ... shall not be less than the annual debt repayment (interest and principal) from Israel

to the U.S. government," ensuring that the loans are essentially turned into grants. And it is the American taxpayer who ultimately pays these billions.

This massive level of financial support for Israel is likely to increase substantially in the event of default on loan repayments by the Israeli government. And the chances of such a default appear to be high.

Richard T. McCormack, chief of the U.S. Israel Joint Development Group has stated: "I do not see how anyone here (Israel) or abroad, can intelligently assess the ability of Israel to service additional massive debt loads."

The Israeli economy is in a dire state and one symptom of this is that the government debt-servicing costs, at 40 per cent, are already the largest item in the Israeli budget. Israel's ability to sustain further debt must be questioned and in the likely event of default, it is the American taxpayer who will foot the bill.

At a time when the 50 American states are starved for investment for their educational needs, creating employment opportunities for the increasing number of unemployed, building homes for the homeless, and confronting the decay in inner cities, it is a damning indictment of the representatives of those states that they are prepared to support such massive levels of financial support for Israel at the expense of the needs of their own constituents.

Indeed, Senator Robert Byrd (W. Virginia) stated before the U.S. Senate that the "American people are ... being asked to

underwrite major new economic programmes for Israel when we cannot develop them for our own desperately-in-need economy," and "at a time when U.S. spending on its own infrastructure is far lower than that being infused by our European allies into their economies."

After the dismantlement of the Soviet Union and the subsequent end to the cold war, the concept of Israel as a strategic asset is no longer viable. It would seem that it is in the interest of the American people to support the "free new states of the CIS" to block the reemergence of the previous totalitarian regimes, and to prevent these new republics from falling prey to the anarchy now evident in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The utilisation of scarce funds to support the absorption of new immigration into Israel cannot be characterised as humanitarian, as Jews under the CIS enjoy the same status as other citizens, and thus, is contrary to U.S. policy regarding economic immigrants.

Indeed, the restrictive immigration laws compelling Jews to go to only one country — Israel — are a flagrant violation of their human rights. Such a practice would appear to also be contrary to U.S. interests with regard to ensuring the establishment of democratic, free-market-oriented regimes in eastern Europe, U.S. and world interests would be far better served by channeling funds into these fledgling democracies rather than using them to undermine the already faltering Middle East peace process.

Whilst the election in Israel of a government which purportedly wants peace is a welcome development, in order for the peace process to proceed there needs to be an even-handed approach by the co-sponsors, and the legitimate and just needs of all parties to the negotiations must be addressed.

The granting of the loan guarantees at this time with an allowance for the completion of 10,000 illegal housing units in the West Bank (which will house around 50,000 persons), and the continuation of illegal building in occupied Jerusalem (which, in contradiction to international law U.N. resolutions and stated U.S. policy is excluded from Mr. Rabin's definition of "occupied territory") and thus continues to undergo massive illegal development for the prospective settlement of a further 56,000 persons), greatly contributes to pre-determining the status of the land which is supposedly under negotiation and violates U.N. Security Council Resolution 465 of March 1, 1980, which "calls upon all states not to provide Israeli with any assistance to be used specifically in connection with settlements."

Such developments also pre-judge the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people who are participating in the peace process in good faith under the auspices of the U.S. government and in the context of the original U.S. "Letter of Assurances" to the Palestinians from U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, which contains the following stipulations: — "The U.S. is opposed to the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem."

salem's municipal boundaries. We encourage all sides to avoid unilateral acts that would exacerbate local tensions or make negotiations more difficult or preempt their final outcome."

"The U.S. believes that no party should take unilateral actions that seek to predetermine issues that can only be reached through negotiations. In this regard, the U.S. has opposed and will continue to oppose settlement activity in territories occupied in 1967 which remain an obstacle to peace."

The granting of the loan guarantees, which facilitate the further settlement of the occupied territories, is a clear violation of the spirit and content of the U.S. government's assurances and contradicts Mr. Baker's disingenuous reclassification of the settlements as "political" and "security" (both of which are illegal, as stated in numerous U.N. resolutions and the Geneva Convention).

Samuel Lewis, a staunch supporter of Israel, believes that the U.S. should use its position to prevent the continuation of the status quo. Mr. Lewis also recognises that negotiations are vulnerable to all types of disruptions and thus asserts that the U.S. policy should strive to "insulate the process." The unconditional granting of the guarantees has achieved just the opposite.

The 1991 U.S. Department of State "Report on Human Rights Practices for Israel and the Occupied Territories" cites a large number of human rights violations by the Israeli authorities,

including deportations, the use of undercover death squads and the torture of prisoners. Although in fact the report only represented a few of the abuses which took place in 1991, and which continue today, the evidence demands, under Sections 116(d) and 502(b) of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act, the cessation of all U.S. aid to Israel. But as we have seen, adherence to the principles of human rights and international and domestic law has been consistently ignored.

Your granting of the loan guarantees constitutes a negative development and violates both your own laws and your government's assurances to the Palestinians. Further, it undermines the attainment of a comprehensive peace settlement. For, as an Israeli editor recently stated, the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories will bring no more peace to the Middle East than the Serbian settlers in Croatia and Bosnia are bringing to the former Yugoslavia.

We call on the U.S. government not to succumb to the intense pressure of the powerful Zionist lobby and political expediency in an election year, but rather to reassess the decision to grant, unconditionally, the loan guarantees, and to delay the decision until the peace process comes to fruition. This process offers, for the first time, a hope of ending the Middle East conflict, fulfilling the aspirations of all the parties concerned and addressing the grievances and rights of the main victims of the conflict — the Palestinian people — including their right to self-determination.

## Fantasies will not cure these ills

By John Judis

KENSINGTON, MARYLAND — Since operation Desert Storm, George Bush, invoking the famous phrase of Henry Luce, has boasted of a "Next American Century." At the Republican National Convention, Ronald Reagan and Jack Kemp took up the theme.

Mr. Reagan, noting that his own life had coincided with the "American Century," attacked "pundits and finger-pointers who are down on us as a nation" and promised "America's best days are yet to come."

Mr. Kemp declared that Americans were "on the eve of a new century and a new millennium." But what were once fighting words have become, in the mouths of these Republicans, empty promises and tokens of nostalgia.

In February 1941, Mr. Luce, the founder of Time, called for

America to enter the war against Nazi Germany in order to create a "First American Century." The United States had already become the world's leading economic power; now, he argued, Americans should assume the military responsibility commensurate with their economic power.

If they did, he believed, the country could eventually create a great commercial empire that "has within it the possibilities of such enormous progress as to stagger the imagination." When the United States emerged from World War II commanding 50 per cent of the world's gross national product, Mr. Luce appeared to be vindicated.

But America's situation is now almost reversed. Trade and budget deficits aside, the United States trails Japan and Germany in consumer electronics, robotics and many other critical industries of the 21st century. The United States is at the end rather than at

the beginning of its century. Mr. Bush and the Republicans seem to be the only ones who don't

understand. They act as if the United States could pursue the same strategy in 1992 that it did in

1942 or 1962.

Mr. Bush, who spoke of the "American Century" and the defeat of "Baghdad bullies" in a speech to disabled veterans earlier this month, has continued to identify America's international standing with its military might. Like Mr. Reagan, he has limited his economic policy to championing tax breaks for the wealthy at home while using American power and diplomacy to open foreign markets and to guarantee cheap imported natural resources.

But this strategy — manifested in the administration's contentious and futile talks with Japan and, most recently, in its dogged pursuit of the North American Free Trade Agreement — is no longer enough.

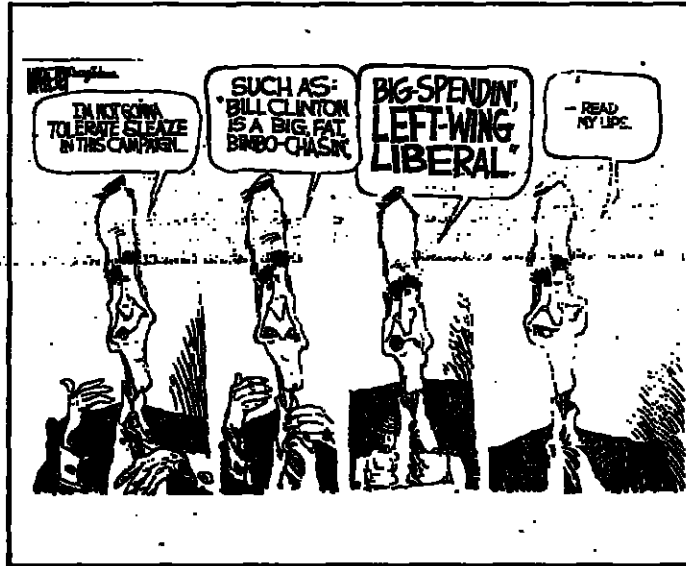
In the 1940s, American economic problems were primarily external — a lack of markets. In the 1990s, the problems are primarily internal.

A strategy fixed on external

enemies and barriers only aggravates the internal weaknesses. Further tax breaks combined with continued high military spending will make it even more difficult to solve the country's fiscal problems.

The internal weaknesses undermine an external strategy. For instance, the new trade agreement, particularly as it relates to Mexico, will increase the foreign profits of U.S. banks and insurance companies, but it will also encourage the footloose U.S. corporations to transfer production out of the United States.

Certainly, the answer to America's problems is not the isolation Mr. Luce warned against. But to achieve a "Next American Century," American politicians will have to acknowledge honestly the present straits at home and refrain from indulging in the escapist fantasies of a new millennium that have been echoing in the Astrodome — The New York Times.



### THE WEEK IN PRINT

## Israeli intransigence makes peace talks futile

Reviewed by Ella Nassarallah

The local press and commentators in the daily columns focused their attention in the past week on the ongoing peace process in Washington, the no-fly zone imposed on Iraq and on domestic affairs.

Under the title "Pack and return home," Al Ra'i Arabic paper said it was more honourable for the Arab parties to a Middle East peace talks with Israel to pack and return to their countries rather than withstand further humiliation from Israel.

The Arabs must take a very brave stand in the face of Israel's intransigence and end the futile peace talks which are being conducted at a time when the Americans and the Israelis continue to commit atrocities against the Iraqi and Palestinian people.

Sawt Al Shaab daily echoed the idea and said that the Arabs should avoid further blackmail from the Israeli negotiators, following a second week of futile meetings.

"The paper said that the Arabs have gone to Washington, for fear of seeing the peace process stunted by a deadlock, but they are now facing a wall of intransigence on the part of the Israelis who refuse to withdraw to the 1967 borders, reject the idea of recognising the rights of the Palestinian people and the idea of exchanging land for peace with the Arabs."

In the view of Fathi Al Najjar, a columnist in Al Dustour, the Arab negotiators to the Washington parley are bound to return with something achieved at the negotiating table.

The writer expressed the view that the Americans are intent on imposing their will

and that of the Zionists on the Arabs.

The Americans want to reach some kind of settlement and peace in the Middle East region so as to divert the Arabs' attention from atrocities committed against Iraq and in the drive to loot the Arab oil wealth, said the writer.

He said that the Americans are also interested in transforming the Middle East into a consumer market for their products, but they are by no means ready to force Israel to give up occupied Arab land and are determined to impose a humiliating settlement on the Arab countries.

Fakhri Saleh, his colleague in Al Dustour, recalled that many Arabs had thought that the Rabin government wanted to speed up the process for reaching a settlement with the Arabs. He said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is not expected to grant anything to the Arabs, as is clear from his negotiators at the Washington parley.

He said that Mr. Rabin and his government would like to look like doves while in fact they are more hawkish than the previous government.

For Hamedeh Farasneh, a columnist in Al Dustour, there is no difference between Rabin proposals to the Palestinians and Shamir proposal submitted in Washington last January, except in form.

The writer said that the Labour government is holding out to the land, as the Likud government did, and is only offering self administration to the Palestinians, but no rights whatsoever. The writer said that the release of a number of Palestinian detainees can by no

means improve Mr. Rabin's image and can achieve nothing at the negotiations.

Taher Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily, said that Arab states which allowed U.S. planes to use their territory to launch aggression on Iraq have joined the chorus of those Arabs who demand that Iraq's territorial integrity be safeguarded.

There is a great deal of double meaning here and many lies on the part of Arab countries which are not sincere, the writer charged.

He said that the current onslaught on Iraq, on the part of the Western powers assisted by Arab states, aims at partitioning Iraq like the partitioning of Germany following the World War II.

The current campaign against Saddam Hussein is actually designed to break the back of the last Arab country opposed to the presence of Israel and the Western powers' lust for Arab oil, the writer said.

One does not need a great deal of intelligence to link the current U.S.-led campaign against Iraq to the Zionist designs and plots in the Middle East, said Samir Qitami in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily.

The writer said that the Western powers and Israel are horrified to see an Arab country achieving scientific progress or two Arab states seeking unity because they fear that such force will have vast resources that can challenge the enemies' presence in the region.

How can we believe that the Americans are concerned over the lives of the population in southern Iraq when we know that thousands of tonnes of

bombs were dropped on the Iraqi population, Shiite and Sunni? — asked the writer.

He said that the Americans cannot be concerned over the treatment of Shiites in southern Iraq at a time when it helps Israel kill Shiites in southern Lebanon and Muslims in their parts of the world.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that if the Americans decide to launch yet another aggression on Iraq, the Iraqi people will not stand idly by.

Furthermore, he warned that the aggression this time could spread the fire to the whole Arab Peninsula and the American interests in the Gulf region. A new aggression could bring real catastrophes to President Bush and his allies in the Gulf region, the writer added.

Tareq Masarweh, who writes for Al Ra'i, said that the Iraqi leadership is quite confident that the people of the marshlands in the south, would rise against the American invaders, rather than against the Baghdad government which has been treating them on equal terms with all the other Iraqi people.

The writer said that the people of the south have no doubt witnessed the tragic life of the Kurdish regions, of the north, who chose to separate themselves from the Baghdad rule. He said that Kurds are deprived of means of living, they are at the mercy of the Kurdish rebels and their territory lacks law and order. Furthermore, he said, the Turkish government is conducting atrocities against the Kurdish people in south eastern Turkey as a result of the Kurdish uprising in Iraq.

Al Ra'i Arabic daily attacked the United States administration, noting that the current campaign on Iraq is being waged by Mr. Bush as part of his presidential campaign against Bill Clinton.

The Bush administration has been lying to the American public about their major victories in the Gulf war, said the paper. Had the Americans been victorious, they would not have had any need to mass their forces once again against Baghdad, the paper added.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily echoed this view, noting that the Bush administration has been lying and using lies as a weapon to win support for its policies. It has been enlisting the support of Britain, France and Russia in this campaign of falsehoods.

Bader Abdul Haq said that the Americans claim that they wish to see no partition of Iraq, while their actions speak otherwise, and they say they want to protect the people of the south who suffered and continue to suffer from the sanctions and the aggression of January 1991.

The western-held coalition's new world order, which is characterised by criminal colonial actions against the people of the world, can by no means succeed, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

It said that any order which is not based on justice, equality and respect for the rights of nations can never survive. The paper said that everyone can see that the U.S.-led coalition is using terms like the international legitimacy and new world order for the purposes of imposing domination on the world.

Sawt Al Shaab daily said now that a Royal decree en-

forced the political parties law in Jordan, one can expect democratic life to be implemented in every respect. The paper said that with the emergence of political parties the concept of political pluralism will be enhanced since political groups will have a chance to contribute to the democratic march.

Issa Sheibi, who writes for Al Dustour, said that in one year's time the Jordanians will be going to the polls to elect a new Lower House of Parliament. Although the political parties now being formed in Jordan admit that one year is not enough to muster sufficient power to influence the electorate, they are going ahead with their preparations, said the writer.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the Amal Cancer Centre, being set up through the efforts of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and the government, ought to be supported by all Jordanians. The writer said that supporting such a vital project is a national duty since it is bound to alleviate the sufferings of many members of our society.

A columnist in Al Dustour called on the government to enact a law that would force all Jordanian institutions to take steps to help deal with the unemployment crisis in Jordan.

Mohammad Daoud said, for example, that schools, community colleges and other institutions could easily absorb the 262 doctors who were said to be still unemployed in the country. He said institutions can and should be made to actively participate in practical measures helping to end the unemployment problem.



## Jordan-Israel talks at standstill

(Continued from page 1)

bilateral issue between Jordan and Israel because of the element of sharing common rivers. He pointed out that all the water from the Jordan River goes to Israel.

He further said that the Jordanians and Palestinians are concerned with the settlements issue from different perspectives. He explained that where overlap exists — whether on water, settlements or other issues — the Jordanians and Palestinians are in agreement that they would coordinate their positions outside the negotiating room (i.e. without any involvement from the Israeli side).

Asked to comment on a recent statement by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in which he asked Israelis to cast off delusions of a vision of a greater land of Israel, Dr. Musser said the Jordanian side has always argued that security in the Middle East will be attained through peace and not from geography.

Asked to summarize the negotiations thus far, Dr. Musser said: "We're at a point where both sides have made their position, at least on the agenda, very, very clear. And since we have tried to really tackle the issues head on, the gap that exists between us is wide. We heard the Israelis say they have come here with both continuity and new ideas. So far we have seen more continuity and less new ideas than we hoped there were. We think that we will inject some vitality into our negotiations with Israel. I think that we are very interested in exploring every way to try to come to a

common agenda because that would save us much more trouble later, and as such... this is not a wasted effort... We are willing to give it all it needs and not to leave any door shut without exploring it towards reaching that... We thought that reaching a common agenda would be done in a shorter amount of time. That does not seem to be the case, but then that does mean that the issue is a difficult one and that there is a gap between the two sides that is wider than maybe people thought. And... we will continue to try to bridge it."

Dr. Musser said the process of negotiations with the Israelis is a difficult one but stressed that Jordan has made a "strategic commitment" to peace and will follow with that commitment. "The important thing to keep in mind is that we are serious about the process, that we have come with all seriousness and with a full commitment both to discuss the central issues, to tackle them head on, with an eye at resolving them and achieving a peaceful settlement. And I think that commitment is still there regardless of whether we're positive or negative on any particular day."

Asked to comment on the remarks made by Israeli spokesperson Yossi Celis in which he suggested that statements made by Dr. Musser in Tuesday's briefing had a negative effect on the negotiations, the Jordanian spokesperson said he has "never been in the business of lecturing people as to how to conduct their press briefings. It is not about to start doing that in reaction to what the Israeli spokesperson said on Wednesday."

## Rabin says settlements marginal

(Continued from page 1)

set together, we listened to each other. I cannot say that these 10 days brought peace, but they produced a change."

Some Arab delegates expressed disappointment that Israel had not shown more flexibility at the talks. "We have seen improvement, as I said, in atmosphere, in tone, in style, but we haven't seen yet that promise in change concerning substantive matters," chief Syrian delegate Mouwafiq Al Alai told reporters.

But Mr. Pines, citing Israel's agreement to discuss territorial compromise on the Golan Heights said: "The Syrians cannot complain that there has been no movement. There has." Israeli negotiators asked for a 10-day recess in talks originally set to run a month in order to consult their government. They arrived here Friday.

Chief Israeli negotiator Elyakim Rubinstein said before leaving Washington he hoped for more progress with Palestinians when talks resume.

Palestinian chief delegate Heidar Abdul Shafi also said there had not been much progress but added there was agreement on some issues in memoranda and proposals.

Israeli officials expressed disappointment the Palestinians have not reciprocated for moves to ease restrictions on Arabs in the occupied territories. Rabin announced ahead of the talks.

Mr. Rabin said the settlements' contribution to Israel's "security" "approaches zero" in light of Arab surface-to-surface missiles and non-conventional weapons.

When asked whether he was willing to meet with Mr. Assad, Mr. Rabin said: "Certainly, any place, any time." Mr. Rabin has offered to meet with all leaders of Arab states, but none has accepted.

Concerning the PLO, Mr. Rabin said he was not going to "play coy" with his predecessor, Yitzhak Shamir, who insisted there were no indirect negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

Mr. Rabin said Palestinian peace negotiators have been consulting with the PLO since the start of the talks, and that he did not care if they continued to do so now.

Mr. Rabin again accused the Palestinian delegates of shying away from the key issue — how to transfer authority from Israel to the Palestinians under autonomy.

"The Palestinians are unable to deal with realistic problems. Their tactic is to talk about human rights, arrests, house demolitions... you want a committee on human rights? Okay, on condition that other committees deal with the heart of the problem," Mr. Rabin said.

"The Palestinians argue matters of principle, such as demands for a complete settlement freeze and an end to human rights abuses in the occupied territories, must be solved before details are discussed."

The Israeli negotiators returned from Washington Friday for a week of consultation and were scheduled to report to the cabinet on Sunday.

Asked to comment on reports that Prime Minister Rabin is asking the Israeli people to give up the dream of Eretz Israel and the idea that territory and geography can be equated with power, Dr. Ashrawi said that it was "certainly" a positive statement and the Palestinian negotiators have acknowledged it as such. She added that

the geography issue was raised by President George Bush and the idea of giving up the dream of Greater Israel was raised by Secretary Baker. Stating that a renunciation of "these moves is positive," Dr. Ashrawi said she hoped that such statements would not be betrayed "by statements that would negate a positive approach."

Palestinian spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi summarized the first two weeks of the sixth round of talks as follows:

"The first week, we felt was a week of tremendous concern and tension," she remarked, adding that although there was a change in tone, Israel came with "better packages" but still the same hardline positions and a "willful intention to redirect negotiations towards particular and partial issues" and not to address the real concerns of the peace process. There was a marked change during the second week, she said, which "did show progress." As they could not allow matters to continue in the same manner, Dr. Ashrawi asserted, the Palestinians came up with "bold and daring initiatives" — the 10-point draft framework agreement; the revised draft agenda; and the suggestion to form a working group on human rights.

The Israelis responded to the Palestinian draft agenda, and tried to "accommodate" Palestinian concerns.

Dr. Ashrawi said the Palestinian team met Wednesday with Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs Edward Djerejian on technical issues, and in the afternoon with Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. She described the meeting with Mr. Eagleburger as "very cordial, very productive, and very frank," adding that the acting secretary expressed his sincere interest in "maintaining very close involvement in the peace process."

The Wednesday negotiating session with the Israelis "unfortunately did introduce a very negative element," said Dr. Ashrawi. The Palestinians had hoped to present the Israelis with their own "bold and daring initiatives" but to have concerns on the Israeli responses to the Palestinian proposals concerning water, land, and access to public information. But the Israelis refused to consider the presentation of the Palestinian team's legal expert, she said, adding that the Israelis "tried to set conditions as to the color of the I.D. of the experts," a reference to Jerusalem identification cards.

The Palestinian team argued that such conditions were not part of the terms of reference, that each delegation has the right "not to bring in new negotiators" but to have experts in different fields and areas especially if working groups and committees are to be formed.

"Israelis don't want to talk to someone with a Jerusalem I.D.," said Dr. Ashrawi in the Jordanian capital following her opening statement.

"It's about time they give up these symbolic preoccupations... we're not asking to add members... we never once raised objections to experts they (the Israelis) brought in... It's entirely unjustified," she continued.

Asked to comment on reports that Israel refused to consider the Palestinian expert, the legal brief was not presented, Dr. Ashrawi stated, adding that the Palestinians "consider the matter still ongoing and still open."

The Palestinian spokesperson reported also that during Wednesday's negotiating session, the Israelis presented the Palestinians with their own response to the Palestinian draft

agenda, and the Palestinians promised to study it carefully and try to "reach common ground that would unite both agendas."

During the Thursday morning session between the Palestinians and Israelis, the Israelis elaborated on their agenda and on some of their earlier positions and proposals, said Dr. Ashrawi. She announced that the Palestinians presented two documents: 1) an explanation of the "experts issue" which addresses why there is a need to allow both sides to bring in experts freely "without getting into symbols of the origin of the experts"; and 2) an elaboration and explanation of the draft framework agreement.

Asked to comment on the Wednesday remark of Mr. Rabin concerning

Gaza — that it should "sink into the sea" — Dr. Ashrawi refrained from commenting on the remark but said the "comment is racist... which indicates an alarming mindset... and it is racist... which indicates an alarming mindset... and it is extremely counterproductive." She assured the audience that the Palestinians would not respond in a like manner. She referred as well to other "misleading statements" against the Palestinian delegation as a "sign of political and moral bankruptcy."

The head of the Palestinian delegation to Middle East talks Friday welcomed Israel's readiness to trade land for peace but said it had not offered enough to satisfy his people's demands.

Feisal Husseini also threatened to raise the explosive issue of East Jerusalem at the Washington talks if Israel continued to change the sector's Arab character.

Mr. Rabin said on Wednesday that Israelis should "cast off delusions of a vision of a greater land of Israel."

"I believe this is a good position in the right direction. We need more courageous positions from Mr. Rabin to push the peace process," Mr. Husseini told a news conference in Indonesia.

Mr. Husseini is in Jakarta for a summit of the Non-Aligned Movement as a member of the Palestine delegation led by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

It is his first appearance with Mr. Arafat at an international conference.

Mr. Husseini said Palestinians had agreed to leave the future of Jerusalem until later in the negotiations to avoid the collapse of the peace talks.

"The Americans and the Russians have said Jerusalem is so sensitive and if we start discussing the future of Jerusalem now maybe the whole of the peace process will fall apart."

"The Israelis are taking advantage of this matter and trying to... make demographic and geographic changes that will (turn) Palestinians into a minority in their own city," he said.

Asked if the Palestinian team would bring up the issue of Jerusalem at the peace talks if Israel continued these changes, Mr. Husseini said: "Yes, for sure. If the Israelis insist to deal with the issue this way, then this subject... will be the only subject in the negotiations."

## Lebanon

(Continued from page 1)

The statement, by the most influential Christian religious body in Lebanon, said there was cheating and vote-rigging in the past two phases of the polls.

"The massive response to the call of the opposition for a three-day strike at each voting phase and boycotting of the polls proved that the voting was a farce," it said.

The bishops also called for consolidating the Christian-Muslim fragile reconciliation which was damaged by the election crisis, the worst since the 1975-90 civil war ended.

## NAM stalled

(Continued from page 1)

ing to the aggressors and does not really refer to the Bosnians as victims," an official from one of the five countries told Reuters.

Yugoslavia has "strongly" defended its record, saying it took no part in attacks by Serbs on Muslims and was ready to work for peace.

Delegates said discussions on Bosnia and Iraq — after sessions through two late nights — were stalled and might have to be referred to the foreign minister and even summit level despite the lack of time. The summit ends on Sunday.

"It is a deadlock," one delegate said. On the Iraqi issue, Baghdad wanted the movement to demand the lifting of a two-year U.N. blockade. But nine states — the Saudi Arabian-led Gulf Cooperation Council, Iran, Egypt and Syria — flatly rejected this, delegates said.

A draft amendment to the summit communiqué presented by the nine and obtained by Reuters said Iraq should "implement all relevant resolutions taken by the (U.N.) Security Council."

"This will lead to the healing of wounds, discarding of hostility and building of mutual confidence," it said.

Another proposal by the same countries also calls on the summit to demand that Baghdad release hundreds of prisoners of war.

But Iraq, led by Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan, has invited a fact-finding mission from the movement to prove "the falsity of the Kuwaiti allegations," saying Baghdad had already freed all detainees taken during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis.

Iraq has presented a document urging the summit to "express grave concern over the serious results caused by continued U.N. sanctions against the Iraqi people, especially children whose mortality rate has increased."

In the main hall, leaders continued their speeches late into the night but delegates said political disputes have overshadowed talks on the future of the movement itself and economic cooperation among members.

The disputes have also distracted attention from themes such as the need to reform the United Nations and complaints that Western aid is being linked to human rights and environmental issues.

Saudi Arabia, one of the United States' major Middle East allies, raised a lonely voice on Friday against overwhelming calls by the Non-Aligned Movement to reform the United Nations.

King Fahd told the summit in a speech delivered by Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal that the U.N. had shown remarkable effectiveness in evicting Iraqi troops from Kuwait and handling other chronic problems.

## Somalia

(Continued from page 1)

and chanted slogans condemning the United Nations and its secretary-general, Boutros Ghali.

"We disagree with Boutros Ghali's U.N. troops," said one banner. "Let Somalia solve their own problems," said another.

One week ago two unarmed U.N. military observers were shot and wounded in Mogadishu in an attack followed by an orgy of looting at the port.

Mr. Hurd's visit went smoothly apart from the banner-waving, 10 gunshots fired nearby as he toured a save the children fund charity feeding centre and an unseasonal downpour of rain.

Mr. Hurd, after handing a high-protein biscuit to a malnourished child, took shelter in a makeshift hut and said: "I was ready for everything, except this rain."

Belgian paratroops, old hands in African wars, were preparing Friday to join U.N. forces on their way to Somalia.

EC sources said Belgium had told member states it was ready to deploy a battalion of 500 men. It was asked for EC help in financing the \$37-million operation.

EC capitals were due Friday to confirm a decision, agreed in principle by ambassadors to Brussels Thursday, to switch \$20 to \$25 million of development funds earmarked for Somalia into the Belgian emergency relief mission.

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# Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK	TOKYO
	DATE: 2/9/92	DATE: 2/9/92
Swiss Franc	1.9993	1.9958
Deutsche Mark	1.3942	1.3974
French Franc	1.2454	1.2475
Japanese Yen	4.7515	4.7503**
European Currency Unit	123.15	123.03
	1.4495	1.4506**

Intercontinental Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.31	5.37	5.43	5.56
Swiss Franc	9.93	10.31	10.50	10.56
Deutsche Mark	9.81	9.81	9.81	9.81
French Franc	7.68	7.75	7.75	7.75
Japanese Yen	10.25	10.43	10.50	10.58
European Currency Unit	4.25	3.87	3.68	3.68
	11.72	11.75	11.75	11.72

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	339.10	6.45	Silver	3.71	0.0.89

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Indicators

Currency	Rate	Other
U.S. Dollar	0.663	0.665
Swiss Franc	1.3226	1.3292
Deutsche Mark	0.4742	0.4766
French Franc	0.5308	0.5355
Japanese Yen	0.1591	0.1598
Italian Lira	0.5381	0.5408
Dutch Guilder	0.4205	0.4226
Swedish Krona	0.1296	0.1321
Belgian Franc	0.0620	0.0623
	0.02309	0.02321

Other Currencies

Currency	Rate	Other
Baharain Dinar	1.7500	1.740
Lebanese Lira	0.0255	0.0277
Saudi Riyal	0.1762	0.1769
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.250	2.310
Qatari Riyal	0.1796	0.1810
Egyptian Pound	0.200	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.496	1.710
UAE Dirham	0.796	0.811
Greek Drachma	0.5725	0.583
Cypriot Pound	1.620	1.646

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	2/9/92	Close	1/9/92	Close
All-Share	142.70		141.75	
Banking Sector	105.00		104.84	
Insurance Sector	149.22		147.58	
Industry Sector	193.87		191.81	
Services Sector	193.31		191.92	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

Currency	Rate	U.S. dollar
One Sterling	1.9640/60	
One U.S. dollar	1.1975/80	
	1.4350/60	
	1.6190/210	
	1.2845/55	
	29.56/58	
	4.8850/900	
	1098/1100	
	124.62/67	
	5.2440/90	
	5.6735/85	
	5.5540/90	
One ounce of gold	\$341.40/341.90	

# Minister tells Jordanian businessmen to press demands

By Samir Shalhi  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour told a large group of senior Jordanian businessmen, company executives, bankers, government officials and economists that they must press their demands, air their aspirations or grievances and voice their rejection of any economic issue by strong lobbying on the Parliament floor.

Addressing a newly-started monthly economic gathering, organized by the Jordanian Businessmen Association Wednesday, Dr. Ensour described the Lower House of Parliament as being weak in its approach to economic issues and inexperienced, noting that the deputies were more interested in political matters and, above all, more concerned with democratic practices on the local scene, especially in curbing "security powers."

The minister, a deputy himself, recalled that when he chaired the Finance Committee of the Lower House in November 1989, the first item on the agenda was the country's budget. He said the members of the committee were quick then to target the budgets of the Public Security Department and the General Intelligence Department for a JD2 million reduction.

Dr. Ensour added that although the committee recommended to the Lower House that such reductions be made, the strong lobbying by the concerned departments defeated the proposal and the House voted against cutting the "security budgets."

"The Parliament is now a fact in our lives and nobody can ignore it. Accordingly, lobbying for the most sound and rewarding economic legislations is of great importance," Dr. Ensour pointed out.

The minister highlighted the case of the law that was presented to the House on encouraging

Arab and foreign investments in the Kingdom and said that the deputies not only rejected the proposal but also launched an offensive that was just short of banning the inflow of dollars into the country.

"All of a sudden, Schwartzkopf and the American policies were linked to the discussion on boosting foreign investments and almost not a single remark on the substance of the suggested law was a reason for its blockage," he said angrily.

Dr. Ensour assured the audience that the government was implementing a policy of least participation, if not total withdrawal, from many economic activities and that among other government measures being carried out there was a deregulation process on economic affairs.

He also stressed that the government was seriously moving towards a gradual termination of the pricing policy, taking into consideration the need for public awareness and the importance of not acting through "shock decisions."

Other than the two suggested steps, the minister also made the following recommendations that would put the Jordanian industry into higher gears:

- 1) Expanding commercial centres and export centres abroad.
- 2) Reexamination of income tax on industries.
- 3) Establishing a centre or a bureau to guide investments.
- 4) Activating the export credit guarantee scheme.
- 5) Easing of customs regulations on industry-related raw materials or products.
- 6) Loosening of government "administrative interference" in the industrialisation process.

Dr. Ensour put great emphasis on the industrial progress saying it was the only way to keep pace with the world and urging the Income Tax Department to provide industrialists with tax breaks similar to those given to the agriculture sector which, in addition, enjoy government subsidies.

businesses," Dr. Ensour emphasized.

He said that ban' ag policies, freedom to transfer profits, monetary supervision and exchange regulations, licensing procedures, a pricing system, strength of labour unions, tax and customs rates, transportation and communications and expropriation of funds are all areas which an investor looks at to secure the safety of his capital or venture in a country.

The minister said Jordan has a very good record in many of the mentioned areas, but he stressed that it was still not sufficient and much more was needed to convince investors of the benefits of investing in the Kingdom.

Dr. Ensour highlighted that Jordan has a highly capable and qualified workforce and that there was a cash surplus of JD5 billion in banks, coupled with weak investment opportunities. Moreover, he said, Jordan enjoyed political stability and was blessed with a popular leadership

exporting to nearby Arab markets.

3) Weak marketing by the private sector.

The minister acknowledged that the governmental newly-established Export Development Corporation must activate the entry of Jordanian products to new markets and help the private sector sell its products abroad.

He pointed out that it was unreasonable to expect a small Jordanian entrepreneur to export handicraft, for example, to Kazakhstan without government help in the first stage at least.

4) Difficulty in obtaining industrial financing because banks usually tend to lend short-term and avoid risky or unsecured credits.

5) Weakness in supportive services for exports, such as packaging, freight, handling and displaying products.

6) Cumbersome customs procedures.

The minister said the wide gap between legislation and implementation in the field of customs has given rise to many problems in evaluating and clearing procedures which turn away a potential investor.

7) Absence of a national investment corporation.

8) Weak demand to benefit from export credit guarantee corporations.

9) Shortfalls and incomplete law on encouraging investments.

The minister rejected an observation that regulations and functions between various ministries do often clash, leaving an investor or an industrialist in absolute confusion on government intentions and plans.

"All ministries and government departments work to fulfill the objectives of the country's structural adjustment programme which envisages considerable reduction in the budget deficit as a priority. If a rare cost arises regarding a certain decision it is simply because a ministry tries to shift a financial obligation from one section to another, prompting a false rumour that the government was changing its economic course," he explained.

Dr. Ensour reminded the audience that the end of the cold war has given rise to the economic power as the new feature in international affairs.

Citing the economic sanctions on Iraq as an example of today's modern warfare on "naughty countries," the minister noted that international economic powers were now more capable to interfere and twist the economy of world countries not only in form, but also in content and substance.

He said that the private sector had been given global economic dominance and that the main international concern was to remove all hindrances that impeded the smooth flow of world commerce in all directions.



Abdullah Ensour

He explained the general economic situation in Jordan and specifically focused on the investment climate which he defined as being a combination of political, economic, social, legal, administrative factors and the availability of a good infrastructure and resources that affect an investor's decision.

"Any imbalance in any one of these factors destabilizes in some form or another the whole climate for investment and makes a country less attractive for

that was receptive to forces of changes.

However, he pointed out the following areas of deficiencies that hinder Jordan's economic progress:

1) The small size of the local market.

According to the minister, this has limited investments in Jordan to import — substitute industries and has drawn "protection" regulations from previous governments. As a result, and due to the absence of competition, Jordanian industries remained small and did not strive to improve the quality of their products and lower production costs.

2) Exports under protocols to Arab markets.

"This area widened the local 'protection' to Jordanian industries from another 'protection' from neighbouring Arab countries, resulting in keeping Jordanian products shielded from competition and killing any incentives for manufacturers to export to markets outside the 'protocol' system."

In addition, the recent political turmoil in the region has dealt a heavy blow to Jordanian exporters who built their hopes on

## Italy hikes interest rates to defend lira

MILAN (R) — Italy's central bank raised two key lending rates a stinging 1.75 percentage points Friday, ramming home the message to financial markets that the weak lira would not be devalued.

The increase, which hit stock and bond prices, hoisted the discount rate to 15 per cent and the fixed term advances rate, the rate at which the Bank of Italy gives emergency financing to the commercial banking system, to 16.5 per cent.

ordered, with immediate effect, the rise in the discount rate," the bank said.

News of the dearer borrowing brought quick relief to the lira which gained to 765.28 to the German mark by midday although it remained within a whisker of its 765.40 EMS floor.

Stock market prices plunged on the news with carmaker Fiat SPA losing 7.3 per cent in near panic selling.

The changes were announced after Bank of Italy intervention on the foreign exchange markets had failed to lift the lira off its floor within the European Monetary System (EMS), the European Community's mechanism for currency rate management.

"In the face of persistent tensions on the currency market, the governor of the Bank of Italy has

"Everybody is just selling everything. Normally rate changes come after the stock market is closed but this hit us in the middle of trading," said Giuseppe Bonini of broker Interim SPA.

The central bank said the decision to increase rates reflected a recent statement by EC governments "not to change currency parties within the European system."

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## Italian minister blames 'criminal action' in Bosnia plane crash

SARAJEVO (AP) — An Italian cabinet minister said Friday that a "criminal action" caused an Italian relief plane to crash in Bosnia-Herzegovina, killing four crew members.

U.N. officials quoted witnesses as saying they saw two missiles fired at the plane Thursday. But the officials stressed they did not know yet whether it had been shot down.

"Some kind of disintegration or explosion" appears to have spread the wreckage over a 1.5-kilometre (one mile) area, said Peter Kessler, the Zagreb spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Italian Foreign Trade Minister Claudio Vitalone said Friday in Rome that there were "elements, traces" indicating the plane had been hit by a missile.

"The elements in our possession lead decisively toward that judgment," Mr. Vitalone told reporters. He called it a "criminal action" against a humanitarian mission.

A U.N. search and rescue team Friday pulled the bodies of four Italian flyers from the wreckage and searched for clues to the cause of the crash.

The U.S. government reported that two of four U.S. helicopters sent to search for the plane Thursday were shot at by unidentified forces but were not hit. It was the first time U.S. helicopters sent to protect aid shipments had flown over war-torn Bosnia.

The Italian plane went down Thursday 34 kilometres (21 miles) west of Sarajevo while carrying 9 tonnes of relief supplies for this besieged city. The U.N.-organised international airlift was suspended while the cause of the crash was investigated.

Izumi Nakamitsu, chief of the U.N. refugee operation in Sarajevo, said U.N. troops found a hole in the fuselage of the wrecked plane and pieces of what could be an anti-aircraft missile.

But the U.N. officials stressed they did not have positive proof that the plane had been shot down. "We will not know the full story until there is a full and thorough investigation," Mr. Nakamitsu said.

The crash came the same day that a U.N. relief convoy carrying nearly 100 tonnes of food and medicine safely reached the embattled city of Gorazde, south-east of Sarajevo. The convoy returned safely to Sarajevo Friday, delayed overnight by mined roads.

The convoy was delayed on the way to Gorazde when Serb fighters commandeered two trucks of food, which were later returned empty, an Associated Press photographer on the convoy said.

Mortar shells fell on the Bosnian capital late Thursday and Friday morning, breaking a two-day lull in shelling.

Marrack Goulding, U.N. undersecretary-general for peacekeeping, had said Thursday there were no signs of Serb fighters turning heavy weapons over for U.N. supervision as their leader promised Wednesday.

A reporter for BBC-TV, Kate Adie, was injured slightly when her armoured car came under fire Friday on Sarajevo's notorious airport road, a BBC spokesman in London said. A metal splinter from one of about five bullets hit the car struck her boot, bruising her right foot.

Scores of journalists have been hurt in the last year covering fighting in former Yugoslavia, and nearly 30 have been killed. More than 8,000 people have died — some estimates say up to 35,000 — and tens of thousands are missing in Bosnia's civil war. An estimated 2 million people are refugees.

Serb forces have seized about 70 per cent of the country since fighting erupted after majority Muslims and Croats voted for independence on Feb. 29.

The crash of the Italian twin-engine Turboprop was the first involving the airlift, although other planes have been shot at. It is unclear who controls the territory from which a missile would have been fired. There are scattered Serb positions, but most of the area is controlled by Croats, Muslims or a combination.

Mr. Nakamitsu said the circumstances surrounding the crash were suspicious because the crew

last contacted the Sarajevo control tower 30 minutes after leaving the Croatian port of Split bound for Sarajevo, and then suddenly disappeared. The weather was good and there were no subsequent communications from the crew, she said.

Also Friday, a U.N. conference on humanitarian aid to the war-ravaged republics of the former Yugoslavia opened Friday with an appeal for nearly \$500 million in contributions to deal with the crisis.

A statement by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said the world body would seek \$434,165,800 to meet critical food, shelter, medical and transport needs until April 1993.

The office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, was set to launch the appeal, involving several U.N. agencies, in the name of Secretary-General Boutros Ghali after Geneva talks on the refugee crisis.

The meeting at the U.N.'s European headquarters was attended by Britain's Lord Owen and U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance, co-chairman of an international conference on Yugoslavia which began in Geneva Thursday.

U.S. official Warren Zimmerman supported the appeal and said Washington would contribute \$40 million for relief, convoys and shelter, according to a text released by the U.S. mission.

Asian countries, who will have nine seats on the 41-seat council, held emergency negotiations with the Iranians to find a compromise solution.

After seven hours of bickering in an afternoon session which was not even scheduled to take place, the conference eventually adopted the treaty to an ironic round of applause.

The ruling National Party expressed distress at the ANC's decision, saying it had been selfish not to consider the interests of all South Africans.

"It is a pity the ANC has chosen this path. The ANC knows mass action and strikes raise the political temperature, intensify and violence, yet it clings to it," said party General Secretary Stoffel Van Der Merwe.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, heading a team of three European Community ministers on a visit to gauge the political situation, said South Africa's politicians urgently needed to talk to each other.

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## ANC rejects resumption of talks

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The African National Congress quashed prospects for a resumption of full-scale Democracy talks in South Africa and vowed to intensify its campaign to topple the white minority government.

"The National Executive Committee (NEC) endorsed proposals for the intensification of the mass campaign... to achieve democracy, steps to deal with violence and the immediate release of political prisoners," the ANC said in a statement.

"We will not let the government off the hook, we will continue the pressure..."

The statement, following a three-day meeting of the ANC's top policy-making body, dashed optimism expressed by President F.W. de Klerk, other government leaders and the international community that democracy talks could soon resume.

Other South African leaders said they feared the ANC decision to step up its campaign of mass protests and strikes would cause more harm to the economy and precipitate further bloodshed in the black townships.

"Since the collapse of talks the economy has deteriorated further, unemployment has risen and business confidence is at low level," Henne Viljoen, president of the South African Chamber of Commerce, told Reuters.

"We sincerely hope that economic considerations will persuade all South African politicians of the need for economic and social stability as a prerequisite for the economic revival, not only of South Africa, but the subcontinent as a whole."

South Africa's recession, aggravated by the worst drought this century, has already cost more than 250,000 jobs and surveys suggest the ranks of the unemployed will swell even further.

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## Ceasefire agreed in 2 Transcaucasian hotspots

MOSCOW (R) — Prospects of defusing two bitter ethnic conflicts in the Transcaucasus under-box improved after ceasefire were agreed in the rebel Georgian region of Abkhazia and along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In Moscow, the leaders of Russia and Georgia agreed Thursday to a halt to fighting in Abkhazia which has killed at least 150 people and then persuaded the secessionist Abkhazian leader to back the deal.

Further south, Azeri and Armenian officials negotiated a ceasefire along the entire border between the two warring republics. More than 2,000 people have been killed in four years of Armenian-Azeri clashes over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze agreed that the Abkhazian ceasefire would start at 1200 noon (0800 GMT) Saturday. They also agreed to set up a peacekeeping force in which Russians would take part.

Russian and Georgian peacekeepers are already helping to maintain order in South Ossetia, another Georgian region racked by many months of ethnic fighting.

Georgian officials in Moscow said later that Abkhazian forces had blown up a bridge in the region across the Kodors River. They said Georgian forces were holding their fire despite being fired on.

Mr. Shevardnadze sent troops into Abkhazia last month after the parliament of the Black Sea coastal region effectively declared independence. A ceasefire arranged last week collapsed within hours.

Mr. Yeltsin said that unless the Abkhazian ceasefire agreement was carried out, we "could end up with a situation which is equivalent to at least five Nagorno-Karabakhs."

Azeri and Armenian representatives met at the Armenian border-town of Kayan-Avan Thursday and signed a document agreeing that a ceasefire along the border would start on Sept. 15. ITAR-TASS News Agency said.

The document made no mention of Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave ruled by Azerbaijan but populated mainly by Armenians, where a separate ceasefire has been in operation since Tuesday.

Russian and Commonwealth Television both said the Karabakh truce, brokered by Kazakhstan, was still holding. All previous attempts to halt the fighting have failed quickly.

"I think that the war will finish by the end of the year and gradual regulation of the conflict will start," he said.

Allen's latest film may save him, not sink him

NEW YORK (R) — Husbands And Wives, the film many said would sink Woody Allen because of its eerie likeness to his real-life woes, is winning spectacular advance praise and could revive the career of America's most famous neurotic. The film could be a bit even if the director-comedian's life is a mess that fits neatly into tabloid type. More than 250 film critics and writers squeezed into a tiny Manhattan cinema Wednesday night to enthusiastically applaud an advance screening of the film that tells of a middle-aged man's obsession with a 21-year-old girl. The plot is remarkably similar to Allen's own confessed love affair with Soon-Yi Farrow.

Allen, 21-year-old adopted daughter of Mia Farrow, Allen's former companion and leading lady for the last 12 years. The film has been the buzz of the arts world for three weeks since Allen and Farrow entered into a bitter public custody battle for their three children. Farrow accused Allen of abusing their seven-year-old adopted daughter and having the affair with Soon-Yi. Allen vehemently denied abusing his daughter, but admitted the affair.

Foreigners stressed by life in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Three out of five foreign business executives living in Japan feel stress because of differences in lifestyle and in personal relations at work, according to a survey released by a telephone company. More than half of 100 polled said making calls home was an effective way to overcome stress, but many were turning to drink. The survey, covering foreigners who had lived in Japan for more than a year, was conducted by Kokusai Denwa Denwa Kaisha. "I feel a lot of stress living in Japan. Too many people on the street, too many bicycles and too many cars," said an American woman who has lived in Japan for several years. Small apartments, the high cost of living, too many people, and too many smokers are resulting in discontent, headaches and stiffness in the shoulders among the foreign business community, according to the survey. Some 61 per cent of those polled felt they were under stress, and that more than half of them blamed it on personal relations in the office.

"When divorcing, women prefer cash to children"

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese women getting divorced would rather battle over cash and property, not custody of their children, according to a survey. Bank savings, cash and resort homes were the top three items housewives said they would want to keep after a divorce, a recent survey of 200 women by major advertising firm Hokuhado showed. Sons came in fourth, while daughters ranked fifth, followed by homes, TV sets, artworks and handbags. "Although the questionnaire asked about a hypothetical divorce, the results were pretty businesslike," the survey concluded. Meanwhile, a separate survey said nearly half of its sample of Japanese fathers believe they are losing ground in the family. "The study reaffirmed the stereotype of the workaholic Japanese male," said Masaki Nakamura, a spokesman for the Tokai Bank that conducted the survey. Of the 915 responding fathers with teenage children who resided in the major cities of Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka, 46.6 per cent said their dignity as father had declined, compared to that of their own fathers. The survey conducted in July also found that 80.8 per cent of the fathers spend less than 30 minutes a day conversing with their children.

## Third world grudgingly accepts chemical arms pact

GENEVA (R) — The Geneva conference on disarmament finally agreed to send a long-awaited treaty banning chemical weapons to the United Nations for approval, despite a last-minute Iranian move which threatened to block it.

The decision late Thursday ended 24 years of negotiations on the pact, which will be the first to ban the use, possession and

manufacture of chemical arms. But, instead of celebrations to mark an historic moment in arms control, the conference adopted the treaty amid bickering on the negotiating floor and bitterness from Third World nations which regard it as too intrusive.

Iran, billing itself as "the latest and hopefully the last victim of these weapons of horror," threatened to block passage of

the draft treaty through the 39-nation conference.

It says Iraqi chemical attacks during the 1980-88 war were the last use of such weapons on foreign soil.

Iranian Ambassador Hassan Moushghi told the conference that Iran could not accept the proposed composition of the executive council of the body which will police the treaty.

Asian countries, who will have nine seats on the 41-seat council, held emergency negotiations with the Iranians to find a compromise solution.

After seven hours of bickering in an afternoon session which was not even scheduled to take place, the conference eventually adopted the treaty to an ironic round of applause.

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## WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

### Italy urges fast approval of Maastricht

ROME (R) — Italian leaders launched an all-out campaign to press parliament into ratifying the EC Maastricht Treaty before France's Sept. 20 referendum. Opening the first parliamentary debate, Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo urged members of the Senate (Upper House) Foreign Affairs Committee to send a strong signal to French voters by backing the accord as soon as possible. Parliamentary sources said it was probable the full Senate would ratify Maastricht four or five days before the referendum. "If the French vote 'no' it would open up a grave crisis," Mr. Colombo told reporters afterwards. "We must help each other," he added. "Italy can give Europe a hand and help overcome this climate of suspicion about unity."

### Protestant mayor snubs Irish president

LONDONDERRY, Northern Ireland (R) — Londonderry's Protestant mayor is to boycott the opening of a conference entitled "beyond hate: living with our differences" because Irish President Mary Robinson will be attending. Alderman William Hay said his problem was that he was a constitutional unionist (supporter of continued British rule in Northern Ireland). "At this time in our history it is difficult to meet a head of state whose country claims jurisdiction over mine," he said. The conference, with 80 delegates from 22 countries, is to be opened next Sunday by President Robinson. Among those attending are four former Beirut hostages — Brian Keenan, Terry Waite, Terry Anderson and Father Lawrence Jenou. Conference director Dr. Carol Ritter said "the city is an ideal venue for the conference. Its people know firsthand the violence of the troubles. They also know the failures and successes encountered in trying to move beyond hate and live with deep differences."

### India, Pakistan to improve ties

JAKARTA (R) — India and Pakistan, which have fought wars against each other three times since 1947, pledged Thursday to try to improve their strained relations. "After going into all the details of these setbacks that we came up against, we still feel that we have to continue our efforts, not always expecting immediate or instantaneous success," Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said. Mr. Rao was speaking to reporters after a 75-minute meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Kashmir, the cause of two of the wars between the neighbours, was among the subjects the two discussed over breakfast during a Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta.

### Kashmir rebel leader killed

SRINAGAR, India (AP) — A Muslim rebel leader wanted by police was fatally shot during a gun battle in northern Kashmir, police said Thursday. Iqbal Zargar, 26, the acting chief of the outlawed Al Umar Mujahideen rebel group, was killed in Srinagar, Police Chief Balwinder Singh Bedi said. He did not give details of the incident.

### Canada to hold unity referendum on Oct. 26

OTTAWA (R) — Prime Minister Brian Mulroney Thursday called a nationwide referendum on Oct. 26 to seek Canadians' approval for an agreement struck with French-speaking Quebec to preserve Canadian unity. Mr. Mulroney recalled parliament from its summer recess to authorise a yes-or-no question on constitutional amendments aimed at meeting Quebec's demands for more political autonomy. "It is time for Canadians to choose," Mr. Mulroney told a news conference after a cabinet meeting at Meech Lake, where a previous failed attempt to settle the separatist issue was negotiated in 1987. The sweeping reforms guarantee the survival of Quebec's cultural and share of political power and introduce equal representation for all provinces in an elected Senate.

### Zhivkov found guilty, gets 7 years

SOFIA (AP) — The Supreme Court Friday sentenced former Communist leader Todor Zhivkov to seven years in prison after finding him guilty of misappropriating state property and exceeding his authority. The court also found a former Zhivkov aide, Milko Balev, guilty of illegal hard currency transactions and sentenced him to a two-year prison term. Mr. Zhivkov, 81, was the first former Soviet bloc leader to be tried, judged and sentenced. Both the defence, which had asked for acquittal and the prosecution, which sought a 10-year prison term, said they would appeal.

## War, poverty forces Africa to unite at Jakarta summit

JAKARTA (R) — The ravages of war and grinding poverty have forced African countries to become more assertive in seeking to shift the focus of the Non-Aligned Movement summit to economic from political issues, delegates said Friday.

"Africa's voice has been heard despite the absence of many leaders because of the transition to democracy in their countries," Burkina Faso's foreign minister, Thomas Sannon, said.

Mr. Sannon told Reuters the summit was for Africa a test of whether they could achieve unity and direct its focus from political to economic issues in the post-cold war era.

African delegates said South Africa's slow march towards political reform and the dilution of apartheid had removed it from the top of the continent's agenda of priorities.

But he complained that talks in Jakarta had been dominated by political issues such as the unsuccessful bid by Islamic countries to expel Yugoslavia from the movement in anger over the treatment

of Muslims in the breakaway Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. "It was as if this was the only problem facing the Non-Aligned Movement," he said.

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe said the movement was showing a tendency to concentrate on improving bilateral ties between members, while failing to make much headway in acting as a group on economic issues.

"In the last decade, I don't think Non-Aligned countries have been helping each other except in bilateral relations," he said.

Delegates to the summit noted that few heads of government from eastern and northern Africa showed up for the summit, which ends Sunday, and this weakened the continent's power to influence the movement.

But Mr. Sannon said the absence of many leaders did not dilute Africa's efforts to focus attention on the drought in eastern and southern Africa, and the violence in Somalia with its resulting economic crisis.

While White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said it was the natural result of the "deleterious effect" the recession is having on people.

All hands were on the lookout Friday for the August unemployment report, which analysts predicted would show a slight drop in the jobless rate to 7.6 per cent from 7.7 per cent in July.

Mr. Bush was to visit Fredericksburg, Virginia, south of Washington to press his ideas to revamp the U.S. education system while Mr. Clinton was to stop at home in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Looking for ways to jump-start the economy, Mr. Bush toyed with an idea favoured by conservatives of indexing capital gains to inflation, which would amount to an effective cut in the tax on everything from real estate to shares of stock.

But the White